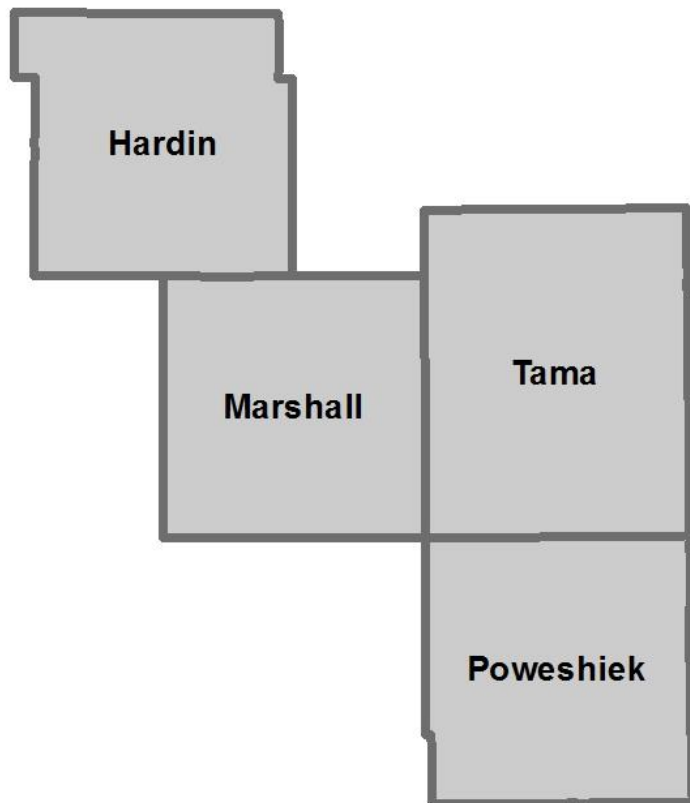


REGION 6 COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY:

PLANNING FOR A STRONG AND DIVERSE ECONOMY IN HARDIN, MARSHALL, POWESHIEK, AND TAMA COUNTY

2013 - 2018



This comprehensive economic development strategy for Iowa's Region 6 was developed by the Region 6 Planning Commission with the guidance, feedback, and support of the Region 6 Regional Development Committee. Strategy and monitoring is possible with a recurring federal grant from the Economic Development Administration that is administered by the Region 6 Planning Commission.

This strategy was developed in 2012, approved by the Region 6 Board of Directors in December 2012, and submitted to the Economic Development Administration for approval on December 31, 2012. Per regulation, this strategy will be updated every five years by the Region 6 Planning Commission and Regional Development Committee. During the life of the Strategy, the Commission and Committee will periodically review the Strategy to assess progress and outcomes.

For more information, please contact the Region 6 Planning Commission.

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REGION 6 PLANNING COMMISSION BOARD OF DIRECTORS APPROVAL BY RESOLUTION

This Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy was approved by the Region 6 Planning Commission Board of Directors, referred to as the Board, in December 2012 after review and consideration of the Strategy. See resolution provided on the right.

Board membership at the time of Strategy approval is provided below. Please note, at the beginning of 2013, Board membership will change. The Board Chair retired, effective in 2013, and two vacancies in the Board will be filled in spring 2013.

Region 6 Planning Commission Board of Directors

Jim Johnson, Chair, Hardin County Supervisor

Gordon Canfield, Vice-Chair, Mayor of Grinnell

Dave Thompson, Secretary-Treasurer, Marshall County Supervisor

Kendall Jordan, Tama County Supervisor

Roger Luehring, Gladbrook and CGA Consultants

Randy Wetmore, City Administrator of Marshalltown

Larry Wilson, Poweshiek County Supervisor

Jody Anderson, City Manager of Iowa Falls

Cindy Schulte, Iowa Valley Community College District

Mark Schoborg, Central Iowa Water Association

Resolution Approving the Strategy

RESOLUTION

A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE REGION 6 COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

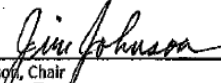
Whereas the Region 6 Planning Commission has sought the input of cities, counties, and economic development groups around the region, and

Whereas the Region 6 Planning Commission has had an active strategy committee working on the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for Region 6,

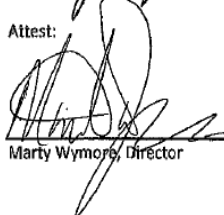
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE REGION 6 PLANNING COMMISSION BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

The Region 6 Planning Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy is hereby approved.

Approved this 10th day of December, 2012.



Jim Johnson, Chair

Attest:


Marty Wymore, Director

December 2012

THE PURPOSE OF A COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

To begin, a comprehensive economic development strategy is most frequently referred to as a CEDS—pronounced “sahds.” For the sake of brevity in this document, this comprehensive economic development strategy will be referred to hereafter as the CEDS or Strategy, when not written in full form.

Moving past acronyms and euphemisms, it is important to understand the purpose of a comprehensive economic development strategy and why planning organizations, local governments, and various organizations and individuals devote a substantial amount of time and resources to prepare a CEDS. For the benefit of everyone involved, the Economic Development Administration (EDA) has concisely defined the purpose and composition of a comprehensive economic development strategy.

*A comprehensive economic development strategy (CEDS) is designed to bring together the public and private sectors in the creation of an **economic roadmap to diversify and strengthen regional economies**. The CEDS should analyze the regional economy and serve as a guide for establishing regional goals and objectives, developing and implementing a regional plan of action, and identifying investment priorities and funding sources.*

A CEDS integrates a region’s human and physical capital planning in the service of economic development. Integrated economic development planning provides the flexibility to adapt to global economic conditions and fully [use] the region’s unique advantages to maximize economic opportunity for its residents by attracting the private investment that creates jobs for the region’s residents.

A CEDS must be the result of a continuing economic development planning process developed by broad-based and diverse public and private sector participation, and must set forth the goals and objectives necessary to solve the economic development problems of the region and clearly define metrics of success. Finally, a CEDS provides a useful benchmark by which a regional economy can evaluate opportunities with other regions in the national economy (Economic Development Administration, 2012).

For a basic understanding, the most important element of the EDA’s summary is the very first sentence that refers to a CEDS as an “economic roadmap to both diversify and strengthen regional economies.” Being a metaphorical map, the CEDS not only presents what currently exists in the region in economic terms but also where and how the region’s economy can move into the future. Focusing on both diversification and strengthening means that the CEDS will seek to strengthen existing assets but also diversify in order to become more resilient to economic changes.

It is also important to note the inclusion of varied interests in the CEDS development process, because diverse involvement helps to ensure both public and private interests are not only considered but also provides the opportunity for public-private partnerships (3Ps). This type of partnership is often the ideal method for assembling the wide range of expertise and resources needed to complete the ambitious economic development projects that are often a result of a regional CEDS development process.

THE REGION 6 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

The economic development district that is the subject of this comprehensive economic development strategy includes central Iowa counties Hardin, Marshall, Poweshiek, and Tama County. The region also includes the Meskwaki Settlement, which is located in Tama County. See Figures 1 and 2. The four counties also include 45 cities. Refer to Table 3 and Figure 3. Overall, these counties, cities, and settlement form Iowa's Region 6, which is served by the Region 6 Planning Commission.

The Region 6 Planning Commission serves as a council of governments that provides planning services to the counties, cities, and settlement in the region. Common services include grant writing and administration, preparing plans, and administering housing rehabilitation programs throughout the region. The commission is also the regional transit system operator, Peoplerrides, which specializes in providing rides to elderly and disabled individuals although everyone qualifies to use the service.

For economic development planning, the Region 6 Planning Commission was awarded a federal grant from the Economic Development Administration to facilitate the development of this comprehensive economic development strategy for the region or Economic Development District. To ensure full representation of the region, the Strategy development process was guided by a region wide committee and public input. Once the Strategy is developed, the Commission is responsible for monitoring the progress in achieving goals and identifying the overall outcomes of the Strategy. This assessment process is also completed with region wide committee guidance.

Figure 1: Region 6 in the Context of Iowa

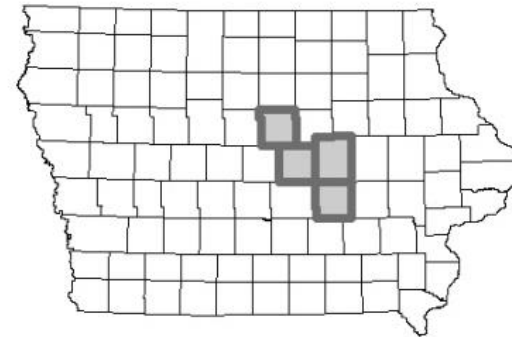
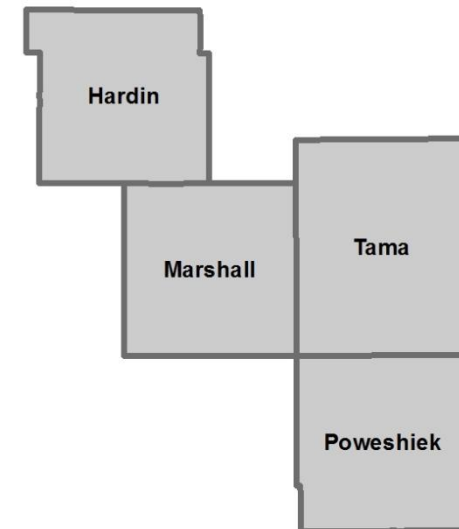


Figure 2: Region 6 Economic Development District



Source: Region 6 Planning Commission, 2012

Table 1: Cities in Region 6 Counties

Hardin County

Ackley
 Alden
 Buckeye
 Eldora
 Hubbard
 Iowa Falls
 New Providence
 Owasa
 Radcliffe
 Steamboat Rock
 Union
 Whitten

Marshall County

Albion
 Clemons
 Ferguson
 Gilman
 Haverhill
 Laurel
 Le Grand
 Liscomb
 Marshalltown
 Melbourne
 Rhodes
 St. Anthony
 State Center

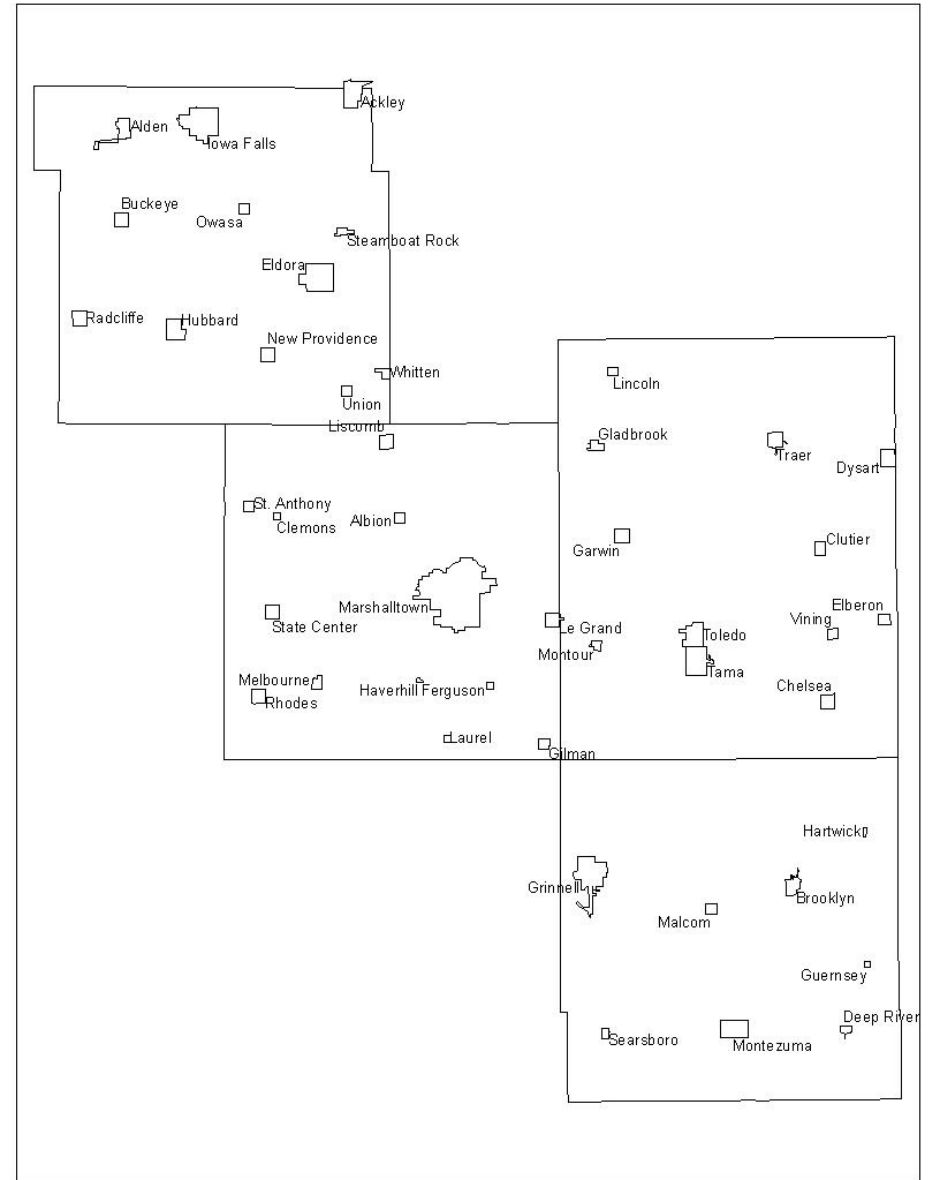
Poweshiek County

Brooklyn
 Deep River
 Grinnell
 Hartwick
 Malcom
 Montezuma
 Searsboro
 Guernsey

Tama County

Chelsea
 Clutier
 Dysart
 Elberon
 Garwin
 Gladbrook
 Lincoln
 Montour
 Tama
 Toledo
 Traer
 Vining
 Meskwaki Settlement

Figure 3: Region 6 Cities



THE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE AND COMMITTEE

The Regional Development Initiative is an effort organized by the Region 6 Planning Commission that involves the coordinated development and implementation of all region wide planning efforts that include Region 6 counties—Hardin, Marshall, Poweshiek, and Tama. To ensure a coordinated approach, a long term, region wide committee was formed to guide the development and implementation of region wide planning efforts including the region's comprehensive economic development strategy and long range transportation plan. Public input and future ad hoc projects that have a regional scope will also be committee activities.

Having a committee dedicated to all region wide planning efforts, the goal is to achieve consistency among planning efforts and garner continued support from local governments, organizations, and the public for the goals, objectives, and action plans developed for the region. In addition, the people who participate in various Region 6 planning efforts are often the same people for each effort, which is due to either their expertise or continued leadership in the region. A coordinated, long-term effort such as the Regional Development Initiative and Committee will take advantage of committee member's expertise and authority in the region but also maximize the use of their valuable time.

The Regional Development Committee—hereafter referred to as the Committee—comprises a diverse group of individuals who represent nearly all facets of the region. The composition of the Committee also fulfills the federal requirements for an Economic Development Administration approved comprehensive economic development strategy. Consequently, a majority of Committee members represent the private sector in the region.

Refer to Table 2 on the following page for a list of all Committee members with their position, affiliation, and type of membership—public or private. The Committee is a volunteer committee with no participation requirements or formal positions, but participation is recorded and made available in Appendix A.

For more information and continued updates on the Regional Development Initiative and the Committee's activities, a section of the Region 6 Planning Commission's website is dedicated to this initiative. Information and materials are made available to Committee members and the public alike to ensure that everyone has access to information. The Regional Development Initiative website can be found at the following address:
<http://www.region6planning.org/Region6PlanningCommission/RegionalDevelopmentInitiative.aspx>

Regional Development Committee



October 10, 2012 at the Marshalltown Public Library

Table 2: Regional Development Committee Members and Affiliation*

Name	Position	Affiliation	Type
Daryl Albertson	County Engineer	Hardin County	Public
Jody Anderson	City Manager	City of Iowa Falls	Public
Russ Behrens	City Manager	City of Grinnell	Public
Lyle Brehm	County Engineer	Poweshiek and Tama County	Public
Deb Collum-Calderwood	Director	Poweshiek Iowa Development	Private
Monica Chavez-Silva	Director of Community Enhancement and Engagement	Grinnell College	Private
Tina Coleman	Director of Public Health and Homecare	MMSC	Private
Deb Crosser	Director	Eldora Economic Development	Private
Tom Deimerly	President	MEDIC	Private
Paul Geilenfeldt	County Engineer	Marshall County	Public
Paul Gregoire	Vice President of Human Resources	Emerson Fisher Controls	Private
Cindy Litwiller	Director	Iowa Falls Area Development	Private
Mike Nuss	City Administrator	City of Ackley	Public
Charlie Smith		Iowa Valley Bicycle Club	Private
Jason Staker	President	Marshalltown Young Professionals	Private
Rich Stone	Transit Manager	City of Marshalltown	Public
Randy Wetmore	City Administrator	City of Marshalltown	Public
Larry Wolf	Vice President	Hardin County Savings Bank	Private
David Worley	Commandant	Iowa Veterans Home	Public
Dan Zimmerman/John Lloyd	Mayor/Public Works Director	City of Tama	Public
Sally Wilson	Entrepreneurial Agriculture Center	Marshalltown Community College	Private
Terence Blaine	Director	Montezuma Community Development	Private
Heath Kellogg	Director	Tama County Economic Development	Private
Brandon Shaw	Area Specialist	USDA Rural Development	Public

*The Regional Development Committee membership is up-to-date as of November 7, 2012.

The final composition of the Regional Development Committee has a private sector majority, which fulfills committee composition requirements. The current membership is 24 individuals. See Table 3 below for the current breakdown of Committee membership.

Table 3: Regional Development Committee Balance

Type	Number
Public	11
Private	13

Region 6 made an effort to include as many perspectives and disciplines as possible in the final composition of the Regional Development Committee. As expected, not everyone who was invited to be a member of the committee accepted the invitation. Types of representatives who were contacted include a representative of the Meskwaki Settlement, the Hispanic community in Marshalltown, a local elected member of the Iowa Senate, various local businesses, Iowa Valley Community College District, and a local organization providing vocational training and employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

For the Meskwaki Settlement, the economic development director participated in some Strategy development activities and was updated throughout the development process, but this person was not a formal Committee member. A few people who were asked to be members of the Committee volunteered to provide their feedback on the development process when information was relevant to their organization.

Several people who are not Committee members—Region 6 Planning Commission staff—were consulted throughout the Strategy development process to ensure important perspectives were not overlooked. Staff consulted includes the Executive Director, Transit Manager of Peoplerrides, and planning staff. Region 6 Planning staff encompasses a wide range of expertise and experience in the region that was important to incorporate in the Strategy.

Region 6 Planner Facilitating Committee Meeting



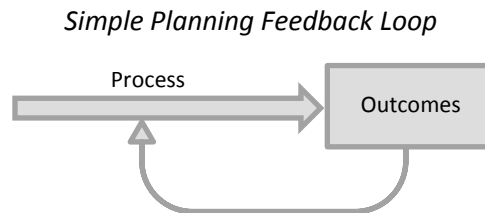
November 7, 2012 at the Fisher Community Center in Marshalltown

STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The basic approach to preparing the Region 6 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) was fulfilling the Economic Development Administration's (EDA) requirements while following the basic rational planning method. More simply, the basic steps to preparing this strategy include:

1. Review current CEDS for the region
2. Complete background research on the region
3. Form a region wide committee to guide CEDS development
4. Identify goals for the region
5. Identify realistic objectives and projects to achieve the goals for the region
6. Create an action plan for achieving goals
7. Create a plan for monitoring progress and outcomes
8. Complete a draft CEDS for a 30-day public comment period
9. Review draft CEDS and incorporate public comments
10. Submit plan to the EDA for review and approval

Several elements of the Strategy development process occurred concurrently while others were revisited based on feedback throughout the process. The planning process is a continuous process with feedback loops in order to produce the best results possible. In the end, if goals and projects are not realistic with support from the region, the process was not successful.



RESEARCH AND INCORPORATION OF PRIORITIES

Aside from learning the regulatory requirements for an EDA approved comprehensive economic development strategy, the first important step in the development process was to review the current CEDS document. It is important to determine the existing strategy's relevance to current conditions in the region and what progress, if any, was made in accomplishing goals and objectives. This review was done concurrently with an analysis of the current data available for the region and a review of existing plans. Data sources and plans include but are not limited to the following:

- State Data Center of Iowa
- U.S. Census Bureau
- Bureau of Labor Statistics
- Iowa Workforce Development
- Iowa Economic Development Authority
- Iowa Department of Health and Human Services
- Iowa State Historical Society
- Iowa State University
- Various reports and articles
- **Existing plans and stated priorities for the nation, state, counties, and cities in the region**

In addition, a series of interviews with county engineers, city staff, and economic development professionals to identify current needs, progress being in existing projects, and local plans for the future. These interviews were completed throughout the region in all counties, large cities, and small cities that the Region 6 Planning Commission had not visited recently.

COMMITTEE FORMATION

One more initial step in the CEDS development process was forming a committee to guide the development and implementation of the Strategy. In this case, the committee is the Regional Development Committee that is dedicated to all regional planning efforts in Region 6. Ideal committee members were first sent a formal invitation letter then contacted personally by the Region 6 Planning Commission to discuss and confirm membership. The types of people in the region who were invited include:

- City officials or staff
- County engineers
- Economic development professionals
- Representatives of large or unique businesses
- Representatives of colleges in the region
- Advocates for pedestrians, bicyclists, and trails
- Advocates for local food systems
- Representative of the Meskwaki Settlement
- Area specialists for USDA Rural Development
- Representative of a financial institution
- Representative of young professionals
- Representative of the Hispanic community

For the final membership, refer to Table 2 in the previous section. For additional information about the Committee, refer to the previous section detailing the Region 6 Planning Commission's Regional Development Initiative and the Regional Development Committee.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, PROJECTS

After the initial steps of forming the guidance committee and researching past and present conditions in the region, the first meeting of the Regional Development Committee was organized and held in Marshalltown, which is the central meeting location for

the region. The meeting was held October 10, 2012. The purpose of the first Committee meeting was for members to meet each other; complete a county and regional analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats; and begin brainstorming goals for the Strategy.

First Regional Development Committee Meeting



October 10, 2012 at the Marshalltown Public Library

During the goal brainstorming process, Committee members incorporated national priorities set forth in the Economic Development Administration's investment priorities, Iowa's targeted industries, and other important considerations identified by the Region 6 Planning Commission. **To ensure Region 6's economic development priorities were consistent with national and state priorities, Economic Development Administration and Iowa Department of Economic Authority priorities were introduced early in the action plan development process. Overall, the goals for Region 6 were quite similar to national and state priorities excluding specific issues such as the auto industry.**

For the first Committee meeting and all meetings that followed, a remote participation option was developed to allow Committee members who were not able to attend a meeting a chance to provide feedback. See meeting materials in Appendix B. The public was also invited to provide feedback through the same method as Committee members.

In addition, all Regional Development Committee meetings were open to any interested members of the public. Meeting information was posted at the Region 6 Planning Commission office, website, and social media. Information releases were also sent electronically to all major newspapers in the region. See information releases in Appendix C.

Meeting Information on the Region 6 Planning Commission Website



Regional Development Initiative page on October 1, 2012

In an effort to be more efficient in the use of Committee member's time and travel budgets, additional information and feedback for Strategy development was sought between formal meetings through surveys using Survey Monkey as the survey administration tool. The first survey solicited feedback on the draft goals and objectives for the Strategy. Initial goals and objectives were

finalized based on this feedback. The survey tool and results can be found in Appendix D.

The second of two formal meetings of the Committee for Strategy development was held November 7, 2012. The main purpose of this meeting was to finalize Strategy goals and objectives and begin brainstorming projects to achieve goals. Committee members were encouraged to brainstorm both large and small projects in terms of funds and other resources needed to complete the project.

The list of projects developed by Committee members were used in a second survey that was used to collect all Committee members' feedback regarding projects. Several Committee members who did not attend the second meeting were also able to add their own project ideas. Based on feedback in this survey, projects were finalized and prioritized for the Strategy. See survey tool and results in Appendix D.

In addition to Regional Development Committee meetings, presentations were made at Region 6 Planning Commission's Board of Directors meetings, which were open to the public. The first presentation was given at the October 29, 2012 Board of Directors meeting. The purpose of the presentation was to outline the benefits of a comprehensive economic development strategy, introduce the Regional Development Initiative and Committee, and describe the Strategy development process and progress. A second presentation was made at the December 10, 2012 Board of Directors meeting to share the goals and projects in the draft Strategy. Feedback in both presentations was positive, although no members of the public attended so comments were only from Board members. See presentations for the Board of Directors in Appendix E.

ACTION PLAN

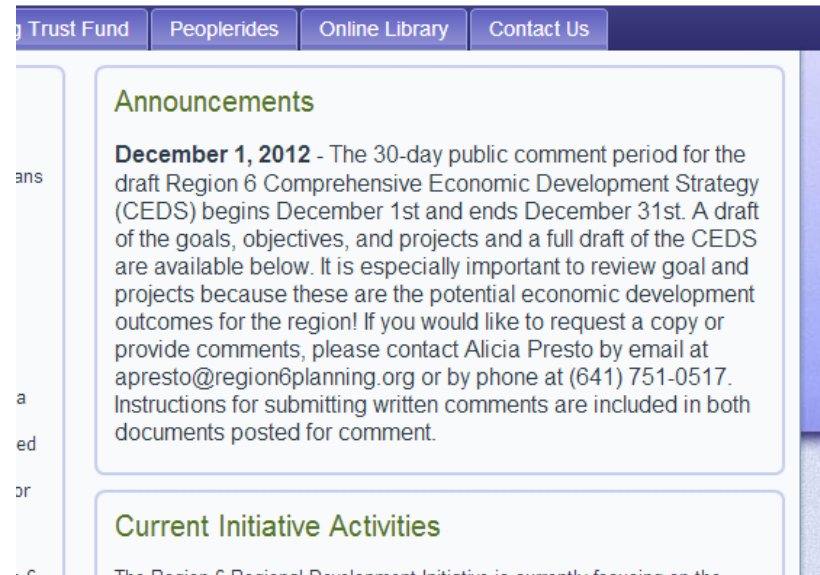
With the final goals, objectives, and projects, the plan of action was developed based on discussion during the second meeting of the Regional Development Committee. When projects were proposed, Committee members identified lead organizations that could be responsible for completing the project. In many cases, the organizations represented in the Committee were suggested as a lead organization. Discussion focused on creating an action plan that is realistic so the goals, objectives, and projects in this strategy reflect what Committee members' believe is feasible in Region 6.

To ensure the action plan is pursued, future Regional Development Committee activities will include review of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy goals and projects for the region. The Region 6 Planning Commission will ensure Committee review of progress and outcomes and, per Economic Development Administration requirements, complete a quarterly report that details the Commission's economic development activities and Strategy progress and outcomes in the region.

COMMENT PERIOD AND SUBMISSION FOR APPROVAL

This strategy was released for a 30-day public comment period on December 1, 2012, which allowed for submission to the Economic Development Administration on December 31, 2012. An information release was sent to all newspapers in the region, posted on the Region 6 Planning Commission website and social media, posted on the Commission public meetings board, and sent to all Regional Development Committee members. See information release in Appendix C.

Public Comment Period Information on the Region 6 Planning Commission Website



Regional Development Initiative page on November 30, 2012

During the comment period, the Region 6 Planning Commission reviewed and enhanced the document to ensure the following: recent data was included, topics were discussed to their full extent, and all requirements were fulfilled. In order to submit the Strategy by the December 31st deadline, the comments received during the public comment period were incorporated as they were received by the Region 6 Planning Commission. No comments from the public were submitted during the public comment period. The only edits or changes that were incorporated during the comment period were submitted by Committee members and Region 6 Planning Commission staff.

REGION 6 BACKGROUND AND CURRENT TRENDS

First, it is important to determine what the available data for the region can tell us about Region 6. Regional and county data can help identify important circumstances that should be incorporated into the final goals and objectives of this economic development strategy. Using available data, this section of the Strategy includes a summary and analysis of recent conditions and past trends regarding Region 6's population, economy, and environment.

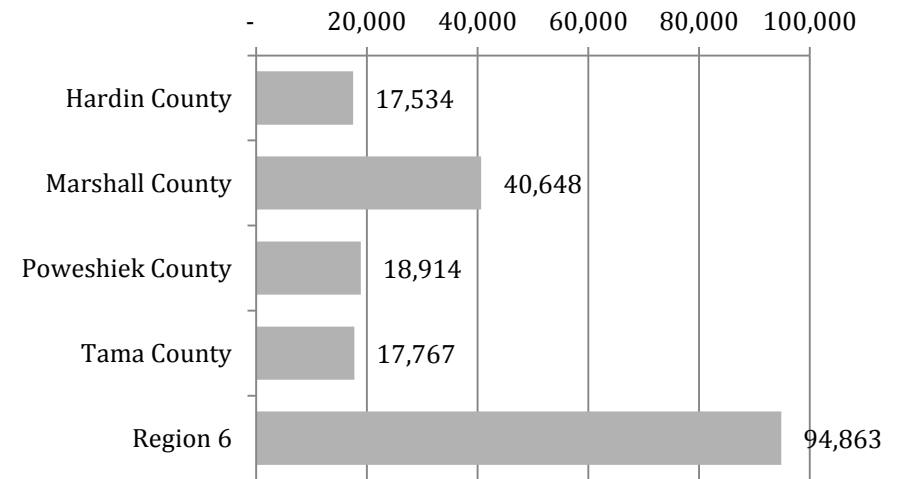
Data sources include the United States Census Bureau, State Data Center of Iowa, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Iowa State Historical Society, Iowa Workforce Development, Iowa State University, past plans developed for Region 6, and others. For easy reference, the important considerations, which are the primary takeaways from the data research and analysis, are summarized in a concise list at the end of each section.

POPULATION AND QUALITY OF LIFE

TOTAL POPULATION

Region 6 counties—Hardin, Marshall, Poweshiek, and Tama—have a total population of nearly 95,000 people, according to 2010 U.S. Census data. See Figures 4 and 5. In terms of population, Marshall County is by far the largest county in the region with a population of 40,648 followed by Poweshiek, Tama, and Hardin County in descending order. There is a difference of approximately 20,000 people between Marshall County and the other three counties in the region. This is due to the largest city in the region, Marshalltown, being located in Marshall County. Marshalltown's population was 27,552 in 2010, which is nearly two-thirds of Marshall County's population and nearly a third of Region 6's population. Poweshiek, Tama, and Hardin County are fairly similar in population with just a difference of approximately 1,300 people between the larger Poweshiek County and the smallest, Hardin County. Refer to Figure 4.

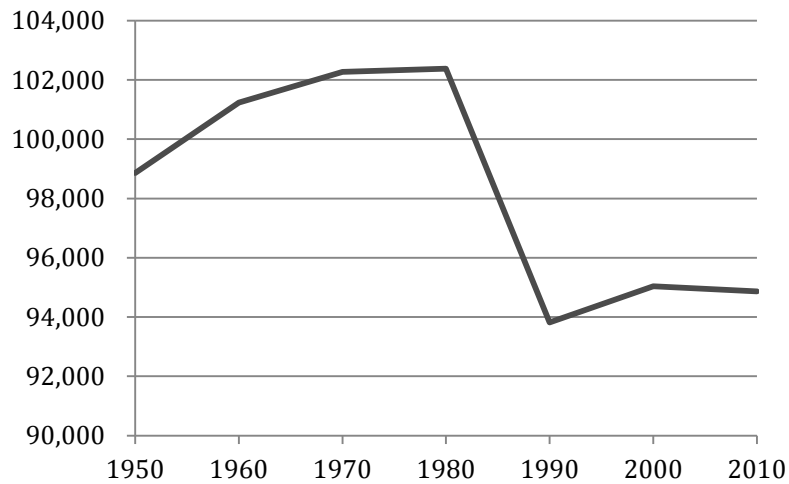
Figure 4: 2010 U.S. Census Population in Region 6



Data Source: State Data Center of Iowa, September 2012

The current population count in the region is similar to early 20th century levels. Since the late 19th century, the Region 6 population has steadily increased each decade until a steep decrease occurred between 1980 and 1990. See Figure 5. Since 1990, the population has leveled out to a comparatively higher level but is still lower than its peak at over 100,000 in the 1970s.

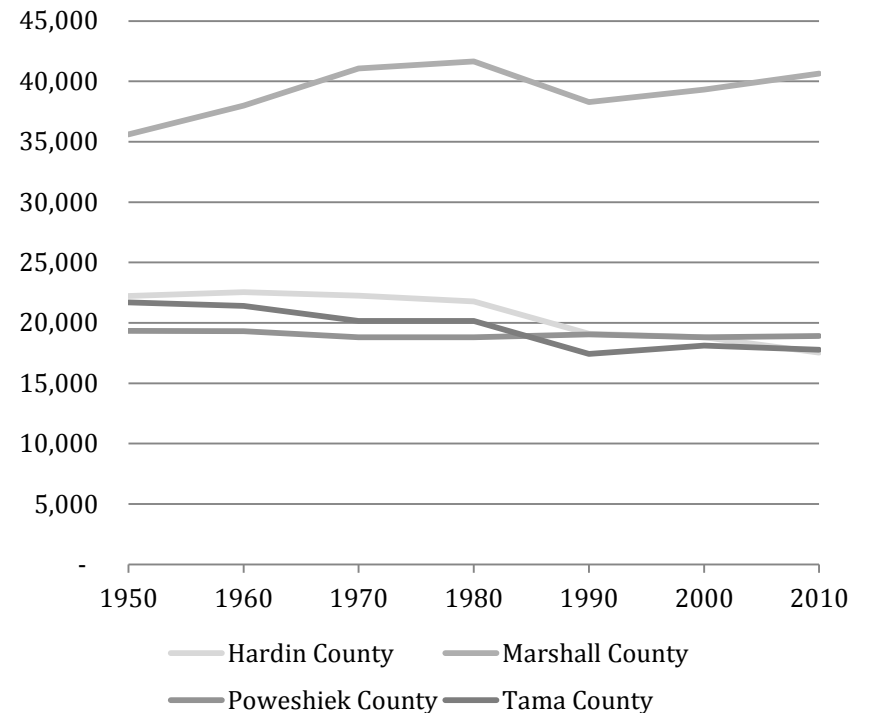
Figure 5: Region 6 Population 1950 – 2010



Data Source: State Data Center of Iowa, September 2012

A breakdown of population changes over time shows that Marshall County has nearly recovered from the major population loss between 1980 and 1990. The remaining three counties—Hardin, Poweshiek, and Tama—have maintained smaller populations that remain above 17,000. Poweshiek County’s population has been relatively steady in recent decades while Tama County’s population fluctuates. Hardin County, on the other hand, continues to decrease in population by small increments. Refer to Figure 6.

Figure 6: Region 6 Population by County 1950 – 2010



Data Source: State Data Center of Iowa, September 2012

The fluctuation in Marshall County’s population is due primarily to any major changes in Marshalltown’s population—nearly 30,000. The second largest city in Marshall County is State Center with a 2010 population of 1,468. All other cities in the county have a population less than 1,000 so it is not surprising that overall population levels in the county mirror changes in Marshalltown’s population.

In Hardin, Poweshiek, and Tama County, no cities are as large as Marshalltown. The second largest city in the region is Grinnell, located in Poweshiek County, with a 2010 population of 9,210. Grinnell is the only city in Poweshiek County with a population that has steadily increased over time. Other cities in Poweshiek County have either steadily decreased in population or slightly fluctuated. The second and third largest cities in Poweshiek County are Brooklyn and Montezuma, respectively. Both cities have a population that is just under 1,500 and have experienced fluctuations with an overall decrease since 1980.

Both Hardin and Tama County have not fully recovered from their most significant population losses between 1980 and 1990. The largest cities in both counties are significantly smaller than the largest cities in Marshall and Poweshiek County. The largest cities in Hardin County are Iowa Falls, Eldora, and Ackley with a 2010 population of 5,238; 2,732; and 1,589, respectively. In Tama County, the largest cities are Tama, Toledo, Traer, and Dysart in descending order. Tama and Toledo share a corporate boundary and have a combined population that exceeds 5,000 while Traer and Dysart have a 2010 population of 1,703 and 1,379, respectively. In both counties, all other cities have a population less than 1,000.

The Meskwaki Settlement, which is located in Tama County, had 564 persons in 1990 and the 2000 Census counted 761 persons. In the latest census administered by the Meskwaki Settlement (provided by Iowa State Historical Society in 2011), the Settlement had 1,343 enrolled members but approximately 850 members live in the Settlement.

Looking at the most recent decade, data shows an overall population decrease in the Region 6 population between 2000 and 2010. The decrease is fairly small at just 0.2%. Marshall and Poweshiek County experienced a modest increase, 3% and 1% respectively, but Hardin and Tama County offset these increases. In absolute numbers and compared percentage, Hardin County accounts for the majority of population loss in the region with a 7% or a nearly 1,300 loss. Tama County did lose 2% of its population but this is approximately 300 people, which is about a quarter of the loss in Hardin County. See Table 4.

Table 4: Population Change 2000 – 2010

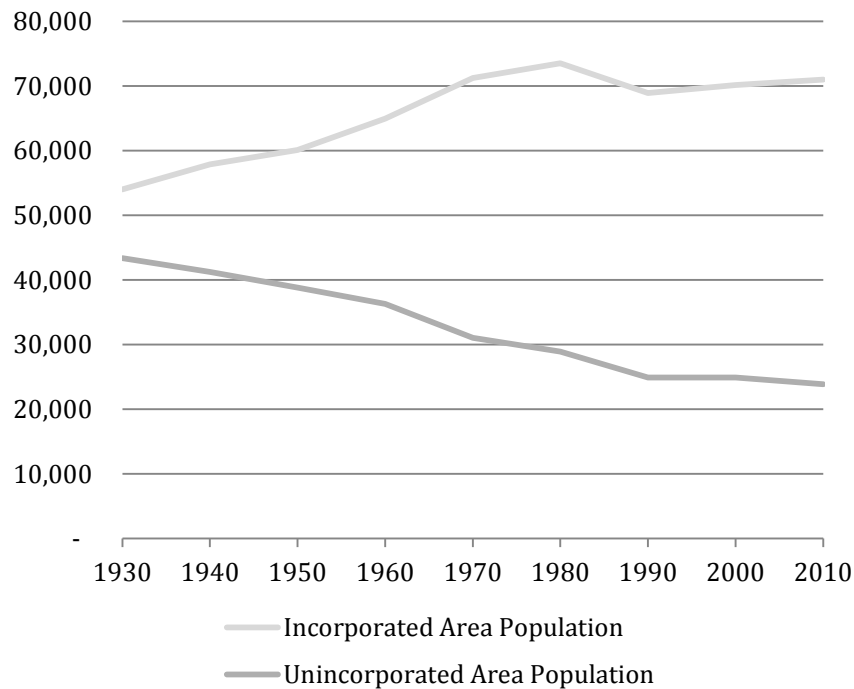
	2000	2010	Change
Hardin County	18,812	17,534	-6.8%
Marshall County	39,311	40,648	3.4%
Poweshiek County	18,815	18,914	0.5%
Tama County	18,103	17,767	-1.9%
Region 6	95,041	94,863	-0.2%

Data Source: State Data Center of Iowa, September 2012

In the same decade, Iowa’s total population increased about 4% with growth primarily occurring in the counties with larger cities in Iowa like the Des Moines area and the Cedar Rapids-Iowa City corridor (Des Moines Register, 2012). A map detailing population growth in Iowa can be found at the following website: <http://data.desmoinesregister.com/dmr/iowa-census/redistricting-map/>, which is part of the Des Moines Register website.

Aside from overall population counts in the region, counties, and cities, it is important to highlight the difference in change between the incorporated and unincorporated areas of the region, even if it simply confirms well-known trends. As is the case across the United States, population growth occurs primarily in the incorporated or more urban areas of the region rather than in the unincorporated, rural areas. See Figure 7.

Figure 7: Incorporated and Unincorporated Population Comparison 1930 – 2010



Data Source: State Data Center of Iowa, September 2012

In the past century, the population of incorporated areas has steadily increased aside from the loss and leveling out that occurred after 1980. In the past decade, the region’s incorporated area experienced a 1% increase while the unincorporated area experienced a 4% decrease. Refer to Table 5. In absolute numbers, the incorporated area increased by 841 while the unincorporated area decreased by 1,019, which reflects the overall 0.2% decrease in the region’s population.

Table 5: Incorporated and Unincorporated Area Population Change at the Region 6 Level 2000 – 2010

	2000	2010	Change
Incorporated Area	70,139	70,980	1.2%
Unincorporated Area	24,902	23,883	-4.1%

Data Source: State Data Center of Iowa, September 2012

Most losses in the incorporated areas occurred in the smallest cities in the region that have a population less than 1,000. Overall, population losses are concentrated in both the unincorporated areas and small cities in the region. The two counties with a population decrease—Hardin and Tama—contain some of the smallest cities in Region 6 and do not have any larger cities like Marshalltown or Grinnell. A concentration of smaller cities may explain a lack of growth in the incorporated areas to offset the traditional loss of population in the unincorporated areas.

IMPORTANT POPULATION TRENDS

Age

Important elements in population change to consider are not just absolute numbers but also the age and culture of the people who live in the region. Overall, Iowa’s population is aging and becoming more diverse. Over half of Iowa’s population increase from 2000 to 2010 is attributed to the growth in the Hispanic and Latino population (Schulte, 2011). Both of these trends at the statewide level are relevant in Region 6 counties.

First, the median age of residents in Hardin, Marshall, Poweshiek, and Tama County currently ranges from 39.6 to 43.7. Marshall County has the youngest median age, and Hardin County has the oldest median age. Refer to Table 6.

Table 6: Median Age in 2000 and 2010

	2000	2010
Hardin	40.6	43.7
Marshall	38.6	39.6
Poweshiek	38.4	41
Tama	39.1	41.8
Iowa	36.6	38.1

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012

Over the most recent decade, all region 6 counties experienced a small increase in the median age of the population. Hardin County not only has the highest median age but also experienced the largest increase from 2000 to 2010, 40.6 years to 43.7.

Marshall County has the lowest median age and also the smallest increase from 2000 to 2010 compared to other counties in the region, 38.6 to 39.6.

Another indicator of an aging population is the percentage of the population that is aged 65 and over. Each county experienced a small percentage increase except Tama and Marshall County. The percentage of the population aged 65 and over in Tama County actually decreased from 18.7 to 18.4 percent, although it remains higher than Marshall County. Refer to Table 7.

Marshall County maintained a consistent 16.4 percent of the population aged 65 and over. Note that Marshall County had the highest population growth between 2000 and 2010 so the absolute number of seniors in the county increased proportionate with the remainder of the population. This means that although there was no proportionate increase, the absolute number of seniors has increased in Marshall County so the needs of this age cohort should be considered.

Table 7: Percentage Aged 65 and Over in 2000 and 2010

	2000	2010
Hardin	20.7%	21.0%
Marshall	16.4%	16.4%
Poweshiek	17.6%	18.4%
Tama	18.7%	18.4%
Iowa	14.9%	14.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012

Overall, data shows that the population of Hardin, Marshall, Poweshiek, and Tama County is aging. Compared to Iowa, counties in Region 6 have older median ages and a higher overall percentage

of the population that is aged 65 and over. Data from Census 2010 shows that Iowa’s median age is just over 38 and the population aged 65 and over is just under 15 percent, which are a few years and percentage points lower than Region 6.

Natural Change

Before discussing changes in race, noting the extremely small component of population increase in the region—natural change—will highlight how important in-migration is to slow down population losses in the region. To clarify, natural change in population is the number of births minus the number of deaths, which excludes population increase or decrease due to migration. In Region 6, from 2000 to 2010 natural change was extremely small, just 38. The natural change in primarily Marshall County offset the natural change deficits in Hardin and Poweshiek County, which are the older of the counties in Region 6. See Table 8.

Table 8: Natural Change from 2000 to 2010

Hardin	-59
Marshall	112
Poweshiek	-27
Tama	12
Region 6	38

Source: State Data Center of Iowa, 2012

Since the region’s population is aging and natural change is quite low, increasing in-migration may be essential to maintaining or increasing the population. A major increase in minorities may be the primary driver of population growth in the region’s future based on 2000 and 2010 U.S. Census data comparison.

Race and Culture

Consequently, a second important population trend in Iowa to consider is the large increase of the Hispanic and Latino population and its proportion of total population. There has been a definite increase in the proportion of Hispanic and Latino in Region 6 counties from 2000 to 2010, especially Marshall and Tama County. Hardin and Poweshiek County experienced a modest increase of about one percent while the percentage in Marshall and Tama County nearly doubled. Refer to Table 9.

Table 9: Percentage Hispanic or Latino in 2000 and 2010

	2000	2010
Hardin	2.4%	3.7%
Marshall	9.0%	17.3%
Poweshiek	1.2%	2.4%
Tama	3.8%	7.4%
Iowa	2.8%	5.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012

Relative to Iowa, Hardin and Poweshiek County are less diverse with a lower proportion of Hispanic and Latino residents in 2000 and 2010, and Hardin County is the least diverse. When comparing the state of Iowa with Marshall and Tama County, these two counties have a very high proportion of Hispanic and Latino residents. Marshall County has the highest at 17.3 percent. Only two other counties in Iowa—Buena Vista and Crawford—have a higher proportion of Hispanic and Latino residents, 22.7 and 24.2 percent respectively (State Data Center of Iowa, 2012).

Some of the larger counties in Iowa—Polk, Scott, and Woodbury—have a larger Hispanic and Latino population in absolute numbers. See Table 10.

Table 10: Selection of Counties in Iowa with Large Hispanic and Latino Population in 2010

Polk	32,647
Woodbury	13,993
Scott	9,197
Marshall	7,017
Muscatine	6,803
Johnson	6,200
Pottawattamie	6,151

Source: State Data Center of Iowa, 2012

In terms of diversity, the Region 6 population is dominantly white with a European heritage. In 2010, the proportion of the population that is white ranges from about 85 to 95 percent depending on the proportion of Hispanic and Latino residents. Other minorities in Region 6 include Asian and Black or African American, but their proportion of the total population in all counties is approximately 2 percent or below and has increased by a small increment in the most recent decade (State Data Center of Iowa, 2012).

For both age and culture, there are important economic considerations such as healthcare, mobility, social services, employment, education, and housing. Aside from a population increased in age, another important population trend to consider is the major increase in the proportion of Hispanic and Latino residents in Region 6, particularly in Marshall and Tama County.

TOTAL POPULATION PROJECTION

Traditionally, population projections from Woods and Poole are used to determine the potential population growth for the region. The most recent projection is not readily available and past projections were not accurate when compared to 2010 U.S. Census data. Based on recent trends, the total population for the region will most likely grow in small increments.

Marshall and Poweshiek County will likely account for the majority of any growth that may occur in the future, especially Marshall County. Similar to Iowa, the Latino and Hispanic population in may continue to account for any significant population growth. On the other hand, Tama and Hardin County may continue to lose residents unless job opportunities increase, which is a possibility.

As is the case in Iowa and the United States, any growth will probably occur in the region’s incorporated areas and larger cities. Marshall and Poweshiek County have the largest cities in the region so growth in these counties could be greater than others in the region. Consequently, having smaller cities may foreshadow less growth in Hardin and Tama County, but these counties’ larger cities may grow along with new development and investment.

IMPORTANT QUALITY OF LIFE INDICATORS

A broad analysis of the quality of life in the region is important to consider when building a strategy to strengthen and diversify the region’s economy. The ultimate goal of economic development is to improve the quality of life for the people who live and work and the region so it is important to understand the level of poverty and financial assistance provided to residents. Areas with high levels of poverty and financial assistance may be facing workforce and employment challenges that should be addressed.

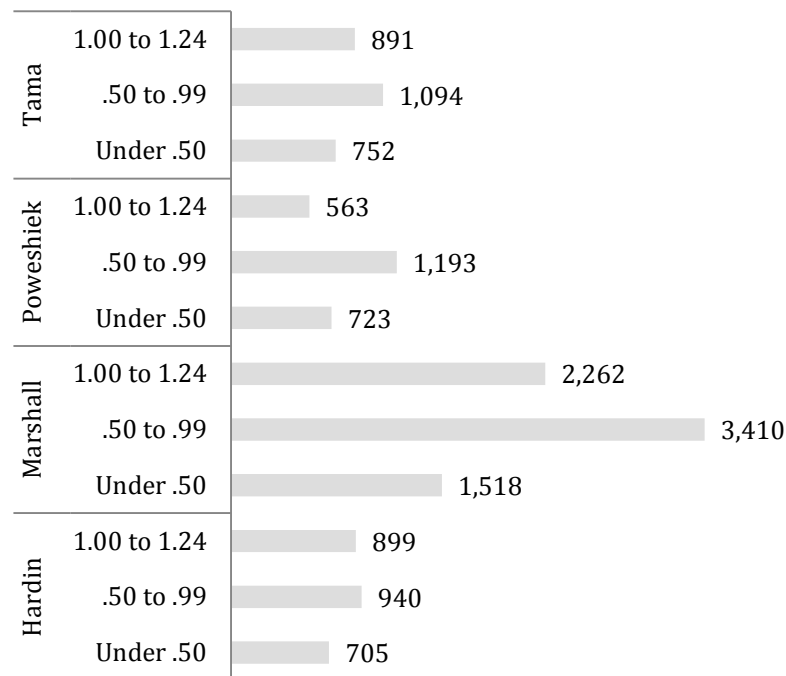
Poverty

One way of determining the extent of poverty in Region 6 is analyzing the ratio of income to poverty level. This indicator specifically identifies how income compares to the set poverty level for a county. Referring to Figure 8, an individual with income that is half of the income set as the level of poverty for a county has a ratio of .50, and an individual that has an income level equal to the income set as the level of poverty for the county has a ratio of 1.00. Also, if an individual's income exceeds the poverty level income for the county, the ratio will be greater than 1.00. In the case of a ratio greater than 1.00, just because the individual is not considered to be living at poverty level does mean this person may not struggle financially.

Looking at Region 6 counties, all counties except Marshall County have less than 1,000 people with an income that is half of the poverty level income or less. In all levels of lower income, Region 6 counties except Marshall County have just above or below 1,000 people. Refer to Figure 8.

In Marshall County, there are nearly 5,000 people who are just below the poverty threshold, and over 2,000 people are just above the poverty threshold. The total accounts for nearly 18 percent of Marshall County's population. Despite a significantly larger population than other counties in Region 6, Marshall County has the highest percentage of population with in an income below, near, or just above the poverty threshold. See Table 11. In the remaining counties, Hardin, Marshall, and Tama County, the population with income below, near, or just above the poverty threshold is around 15 percent or less of the 2010 population. Poweshiek County has the lowest at just over 13 percent.

Figure 8: Ratio of Income to Poverty Level (2006-2010 Estimates)



Source: State Data Center of Iowa, 2012

Table 11: Percentage of 2010 Population with .50 – 1.24 Income Ratio (2006-2010 Estimates)

Hardin	14.5%
Marshall	17.7%
Poweshiek	13.1%
Tama	15.4%

Source: Calculated using data from State Data Center of Iowa, 2012

Financial Assistance

Two common forms of assistance for low-income individuals and families are food assistance and medical coverage. Note that income is not the only qualifier for certain medical coverage like Medicaid, e.g. dialysis. Unlike poverty data, temporal data for assistance programs are available to identify trends in the region.

For food assistance, the number of households receiving assistance has increased over 200 percent in all Region 6 counties. Average benefits per person have also increased from 2000 to 2011, most likely to account for the increased cost of food. Of all Region 6 counties, Marshall County had the largest number of households, almost 3,000, receiving food assistance. The number of households in Poweshiek and Tama was nearly the same with 778 and 780 households receiving food assistance, respectively. Approximately 100 more households in Hardin County received food assistance than Poweshiek and Tama County in 2011. Refer to Table 12.

For Medicaid, the eligible recipients and recipients served increased from 2001 to 2011. The increase in the region varies by county ranging from approximately 40 percent in Hardin County and over 135 percent in Tama County. In all counties except Marshall County, the average Medicaid benefits per person decreased. Average benefits decreased by just 9 dollars in Hardin County while the average decreased by almost 70 dollars in Poweshiek and Tama County. Refer to Table 13.

Overall, the financial assistance to individuals and households in Region 6 has increased despite population decrease. The number of people served increased substantially while the average benefits per person have increased a small amount or decreased. Aside from requirements that may have qualified more people for assistance, the increased in assistance may indicate a lack of well-paid jobs.

Table 12: Average Food Assistance per Month

	Year	Households	Benefits per Person
Hardin	2000	289	\$64.81
	2011	877	\$111.78
Marshall	2000	956	\$69.01
	2011	2,934	\$122.34
Poweshiek	2000	229	\$63.79
	2011	778	\$118.83
Tama	2000	230	\$63.02
	2011	780	\$116.27

Source: State Data Center of Iowa, 2012

Table 13: Average Medicaid Recipients and Benefits per Month

	Year	Eligible Recipients	Recipients Served	Benefits per Person
Hardin	2001	1,533	1,616	\$637
	2011	2,684	2,504	\$628
Marshall	2001	3,807	3,882	\$692
	2011	8,624	8,057	\$699
Poweshiek	2001	1,183	1,234	\$651
	2011	2,459	2,154	\$582
Tama	2001	1,139	1,198	\$554
	2011	2,683	2,358	\$487

Source: State Data Center of Iowa, 2012

IMPORTANT POPULATION CONSIDERATIONS

- ✓ The Region 6 population grew less than one percent in the most recent decade. The majority of growth was concentrated in Marshall County, Poweshiek County, and the region's incorporated areas.
- ✓ Hardin and Tama County's population decreased in the most recent decade.
- ✓ The Hispanic and Latino population accounted for the majority of population growth in the region, especially in Marshall and Tama County.
- ✓ Natural change—births minus deaths—in the region is quite low so reducing out-migration and increasing in-migration is important for population growth.
- ✓ Generally, the population in the region is aging. The median age increased in all counties, and the percent aged 65 and over increased in all counties except Tama County.
- ✓ Based on recent trends, the Region 6 population will likely increase in small increments with the majority of the increases concentrated in larger cities and the Hispanic and Latino population.
- ✓ In the region, Marshall County has the highest percentage of total population and absolute number of people who are below, near, or just above poverty level.
- ✓ The number of households receiving food assistance in all counties in Region 6 increased substantially from 2000 to 2011. The average benefits per person have also increased.
- ✓ The number of people who are Medicaid eligible recipients and recipients served has increased in all Region 6 counties from 2001 to 2011. In all counties except Marshall County, the benefits per person have decreased slightly.

ECONOMY AND WORKFORCE

Since the primary focus of the Strategy is the Region 6 economy, the basic population summary and analysis is followed with a background and analysis of the region’s current employment and industry trends. Initially, having a basic understanding of the region’s economy will provide a valuable perspective while exploring other components of the region, e.g. transportation, housing, etc.

EMPLOYMENT

Total Employment

Total employment in Region 6 was 39,236 workers in 2010. The majority of jobs in the region were in Marshall County. Nearly 19,000 or half of workers are employed in Marshall County with less than 10,000 people employed in each of the remaining counties in region. The population of Marshall County, though, is much larger than other counties in the region so the difference in the amount of people employed is expected. See Table 14.

Table 14: Employment by County in 2010*

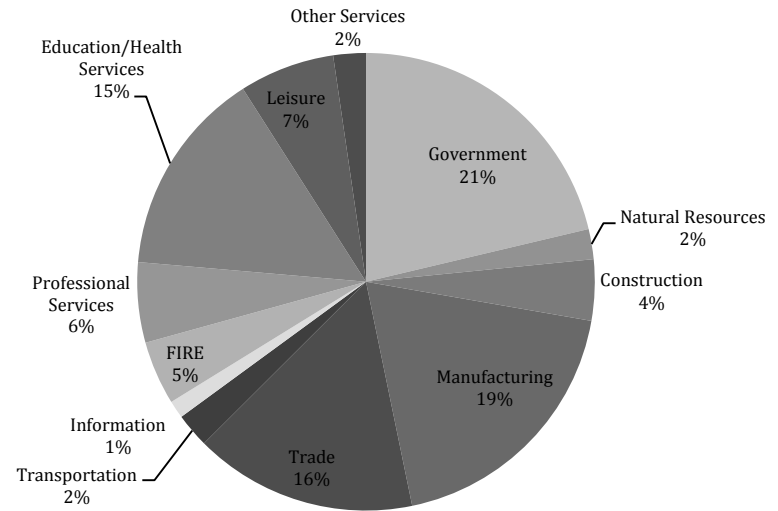
County	Number Employed
Hardin	8,490
Marshall	18,930
Poweshiek	9,730
Tama	8,250

Note: The sum of number employed for each county may not reflect total region employment exactly due to rounding.
Source: Iowa Workforce Development, 2011

Employment by Industry

The largest employment sector in the region is government—including public education and health institutions—with 8,318 workers or 21 percent of the workforce employed. The second largest sector is manufacturing with 7,431 workers or 19 percent of the workforce employed. The other major employment sectors in the region are trade and education and health services, 16 and 15 percent, respectively. The industry sectors with the least employed workers are information, natural resources, and transportation. Refer to Figure 9.

Figure 9: Employment by Industry in Region 6



Note: FIRE: Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate
Source: Iowa Workforce Development, 2011

All except a few of the largest private industry employers in Region 6 reflect the largest industry sectors in terms of total employment. One of the ten major employers in the region is Grinnell Mutual Reinsurance, which is an employer in the finance, insurance, and real estate industry sector. Another major employer, Labor World of Iowa, is in the professional services sector. See Table 15.

Other major employers in the region include the larger industry sectors like education and health services, manufacturing, and retail trade. The more visible businesses that would be assumed to be a major employer are hospitals, Jeld-Wen, Lennox Industries, Montezuma Manufacturing, and larger retail stores. See Table 15.

Table 15: Ten Major Private Industry Employers

Company	Industry
Grinnell College	Educational Services
Grinnell Mutual Reinsurance Company	Finance & Insurance
Grinnell Regional Medical Center	Health Services
Hy-Vee	Retail Trade
Jeld-Wen	Manufacturing
Labor World of Iowa	Business Services
Lennox Industries	Manufacturing
Marshalltown Medical Center	Health Services
Montezuma Manufacturing	Manufacturing
Wal-Mart	Retail Trade

Source: Iowa Workforce Development, 2011

The major private employers in the region are located in Marshall and Poweshiek County, which are the only counties in the region with population growth in the most recent decade. Marshall and Poweshiek County are also the largest counties in the region in terms of total population. Location of major employers may be an economic factor accounting for population growth dynamics.

Comparing data, most industry sectors experienced a decrease in employment, but certain industries increased employment by five percent or more. Most notable are the professional and business services sector and the agriculture, natural resources, and mining sector with an 8.75 and 5.59 percent increase, respectively. Note that the increase is a few hundred jobs or less since these two industries are a small proportion of total employment in the region.

The other major industry sector that experienced growth in total employment is the manufacturing sector, which is a major industry sector in the region. The increase from 2009 to 2010 was 0.07 percent or five jobs, which is not large. More importantly the increase, although small, may indicate stability in this industry sector. See Table 16.

Table 16: Employment by Industry in Region 6

Industry	2009	2010	% Change
<i>All Industries</i>	39,789	39,236	-1.39
<i>Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Mining</i>	787	831	5.59
<i>Construction</i>	1,781	1,684	-5.45
<i>Manufacturing</i>	7,426	7,431	0.07
<i>Trade</i>	6,365	6,156	-3.28
<i>Transportation and Utilities</i>	1,016	948	-6.69
<i>Information</i>	512	489	-4.49
<i>Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate</i>	1,804	1,759	-2.49
<i>Professional and Business Services</i>	2,035	2,213	8.75
<i>Education and Health Services</i>	5,779	5,699	-1.38
<i>Leisure and Hospitality</i>	2,656	2,632	-0.90
<i>Other Services</i>	937	898	-4.16
<i>Government</i>	8,508	8,318	-2.23

Source: Iowa Workforce Development, 2011

For the approximately 40,000 jobs in the region in 2010, these jobs were supported by 2,747 employers in the region. Over 95 percent of employers in the region had less than 50 workers, and there are eight employers in the region that had 500 or more workers. In 2010, the eight largest employers in the region supported over 21 percent of the jobs in the region.

Employers with less than 50 workers support 45.5 percent of jobs in the region, which is important to note (Iowa Workforce Development Region 6, 2011). With nearly half of all jobs in the region supported by small employers, there may be greater stability in the region. There is still the potential for hardship, though, if one of the larger employers in the region were to close since there are several that support about one-fifth of the region's jobs combined.

Worksites by Industry

The industry sector with the highest number of worksites in the region is the trade sector, which includes wholesale and retail. In 2010, there were 564 trade worksites. The professional and business services sector and the construction have the second and third highest number of worksites in the region, 299 and 273, respectively. See Table 17.

Although the professional and business services sector and the construction sector account for a small proportion of the region's total employment, these sectors still have a high number of worksites. This is likely due to the fact that employers in these industries tend to have a relatively small number of employees at each worksite relative to trade sector and manufacturing sector employers. Note that the majority of major private employers in the region were manufacturing, retail trade, health services, and educational services.

Table 17: Number of Worksites in the Region by Industry in 2010

Industry	Number of Worksites
<i>Trade</i>	564
<i>Professional and Business Services</i>	299
<i>Construction</i>	273
<i>Government</i>	271
<i>Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate</i>	257
<i>Education and Health Services</i>	244
<i>Leisure and Hospitality</i>	235
<i>Other Services</i>	187
<i>Manufacturing</i>	129
<i>Transportation</i>	125
<i>Natural Resources</i>	98
<i>Information</i>	54

Source: Iowa Workforce Development, 2011

The industry sector with the smallest number of worksites in the region is the information sector with a total 54 worksites. The industry sector with the next lowest number of worksites, the natural resources sector, has nearly twice the number of worksites with almost 100 worksites. Note that the information sector also accounts for the smallest proportion of jobs in the region.

Wages

From 2009 to 2010, average annual wage increased by 1.7 percent to \$34,973 for all industries. See Table 18. On a weekly basis, the average wage was \$637 in 2010, which is a 1.7 percent increase from 2009. The industry sector with the highest average weekly wage is the finance, insurance, and real estate sector with an average of \$895 per week. The industry sector with the largest

percentage increase in average weekly earnings from 2009 to 2010 was the agriculture, natural resources, and mining sector with a 7.5 percent or \$48 increase per week (Iowa Workforce Development Region 6, 2011).

Focusing on average annual salary, the transportation and utilities sector and manufacturing sector had the second and third highest average wages in the region in 2010. The industry sector with the lowest average annual salary is the leisure and hospitality sector with an average of \$10,523 per year. See Table 18.

*Table 18: Average Annual Wage by Industry Sector**

Industry	2009	2010	% Change
<i>All Industries</i>	34,406	34,973	1.65
<i>Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Mining</i>	33,892	36,411	7.43
<i>Construction</i>	44,466	40,953	-7.9
<i>Manufacturing</i>	43,853	44,482	1.43
<i>Trade</i>	28,639	30,288	5.76
<i>Transportation and Utilities</i>	43,098	44,879	4.13
<i>Information</i>	31,554	33,339	5.66
<i>Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate</i>	43,629	46,529	6.65
<i>Professional and Business Services</i>	34,328	34,307	-0.06
<i>Education and Health Services</i>	34,237	34,418	0.53
<i>Leisure and Hospitality</i>	10,289	10,523	2.27
<i>Other Services</i>	24,875	24,989	0.46
<i>Government</i>	34,175	34,336	0.47

*Dollars/Year

Source: Iowa Workforce Development, 2011

There were modest salary increases in all industry sectors in the region from 2009 to 2010 except in the construction sector and professional and business services sector. The average annual salary in the construction sector decreased almost 8 percent or \$5,000 per year, which is a substantial decrease. The decrease in the professional and businesses services is relatively small at less than 0.1 percent or about \$20 per year. See Table 18.

UNEMPLOYMENT

Total Unemployment

Recent unemployment data for counties in Region 6 indicate that unemployment ranges from as lows as 4.9 in Poweshiek County and as high as 6.3 in Marshall County in 2012. Poweshiek County is the only county in the region with an unemployment rate lower than the state of Iowa. See Table 19.

Table 19: Unemployment Rate by County in 2012

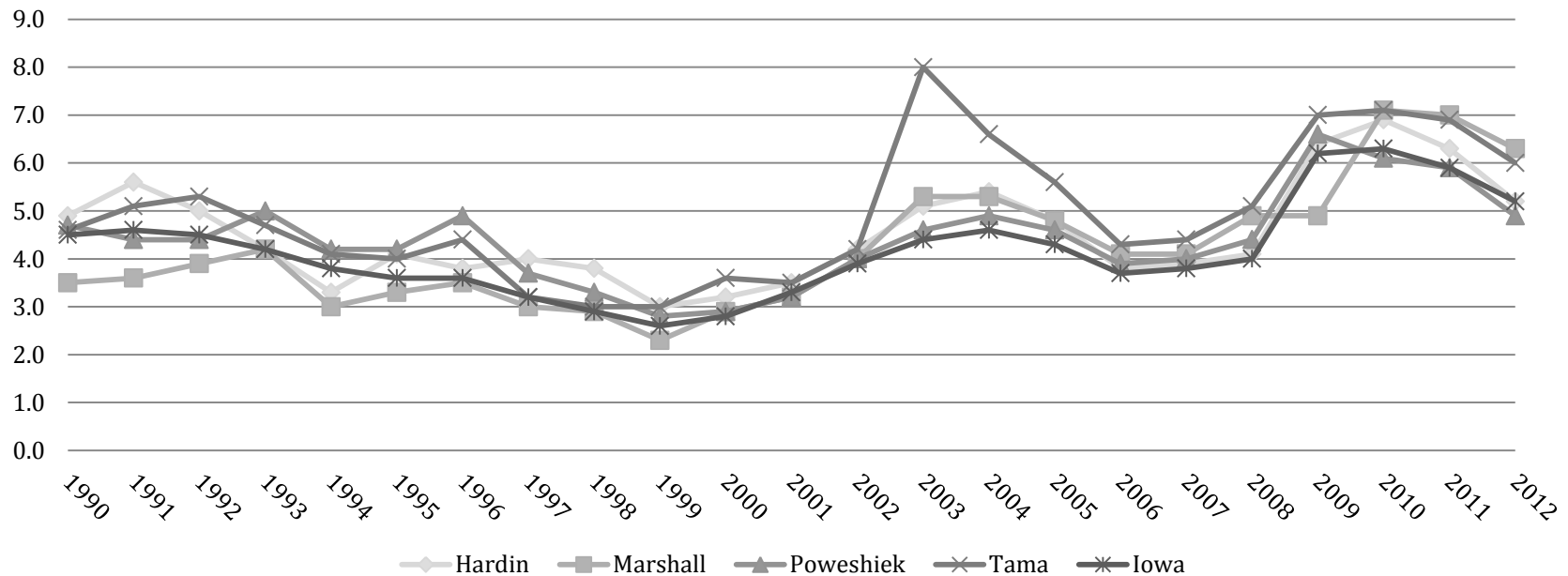
Hardin	5.2
Marshall	6.3
Poweshiek	4.9
Tama	6.0
Iowa	5.2

Note: The 2012 employment rate is based on the average of monthly unemployment rates including July 2012.

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2012

Looking at unemployment data for the past two decades, the unemployment rate followed a cyclical pattern that had an overall negative trend until 1999. The lowest unemployment rate in all counties was 3 or lower in 1999. Starting in the 21st century, the unemployment rate continued to follow a cyclical pattern but a positive trend resulted in unemployment rates between 6 and 7 until 2012. Region 6 followed the general unemployment trend in Iowa after the major economic downturn in 2008, although Region 6 counties had higher levels of unemployment than the state as a whole. Compared to other areas in the United States, though, most counties in Iowa did not experience extremely high unemployment rates. Overall, it is important to note that the unemployment rate in all Region 6 counties trending downward. See Figure 10.

Figure 10: Unemployment Rate by County from 1990 to 2012



Note: The 2012 employment rate is based on the average of monthly unemployment rates including July 2012.

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2012

It is important to note the unemployment dynamics in Tama County compared to other Region 6 counties. In the past two decades, Tama County most often had unemployment rates than the other counties in the region. In 2003, a major animal processing facility in Tama County closed causing a major unemployment rate outlier that reached as high as 10.9 in August 2003. The Tama County unemployment rate gradually recovered from the closure, and there is a possibility of the facility reopening in 2013 with 1,000 jobs.

Unemployment by Industry

Looking at more recent employment dynamics, from 2009 to 2010, 1.39 percent or a total of 553 jobs were lost in region. The industry sector with the greatest percentage loss from 2009 to 2010 was transportation and utilities with a 6.69 percent decrease. This is a loss of 68 jobs in the region. The industries with highest losses in absolute numbers are the trade sector with 209 jobs lost and the government sector with 190 jobs lost. The jobs lost in these two industry sectors accounts for over seventy percent of the jobs lost in the region. See Table 20.

Table 20: Employment Losses by Industry

Industry	2009	2010	% Change
<i>All Industries</i>	39,789	39,236	-1.39
<i>Construction</i>	1,781	1,684	-5.45
<i>Trade</i>	6,365	6,156	-3.28
<i>Transportation and Utilities</i>	1,016	948	-6.69
<i>Information</i>	512	489	-4.49
<i>Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate</i>	1,804	1,759	-2.49
<i>Education and Health Services</i>	5,779	5,699	-1.38
<i>Leisure and Hospitality</i>	2,656	2,632	-0.90
<i>Other Services</i>	937	898	-4.16
<i>Government</i>	8,508	8,318	-2.23

Source: Iowa Workforce Development, 2011

Of the jobs lost in the trade sector, more jobs were lost in retail than wholesale trade, 191 jobs compared to 18 jobs. Of the jobs lost in the government sector, more jobs were lost at the state level than local or federal. Only three local level government jobs were lost while 137 state level and 51 federal level jobs were lost in the region (Iowa Workforce Development Region 6, 2011).

FUTURE EMPLOYMENT

Growth is projected for several industries in Region 6—over 25 percent for two industries. As with all projections, though, the amount of growth projected is a product of assumptions applied to current data. Keeping this in mind, projections should be used to identify general trends in employment that are likely to occur rather than definite outcomes.

In Region 6, the two industry sectors that are projected to grow the most in terms of percentage include the professional, scientific, and technical services sector and the social assistance sector, 26.8 and 25.7, respectively. The industries that are projected to grow the most in terms of total employment include the nursing and residential care facilities sector and the educational services sector, 460 and 430, respectively. See Table 21 on the following page.

Growth in the nursing and residential care facilities sector is very likely due to the increasing proportion of people who are aged 65 and over in the region. Several other industry sectors involved in health care are considered a top growth industry in terms of employment. The ambulatory health care services sector and the hospitals sector are projected to grow, over 21 and 12 percent, respectively. See Table 21 on the following page.

Based on local information, there will likely be growth in the number of jobs in the region. Several large employers are currently or planning to expand. A few examples include construction of a new Ellsworth Municipal Hospital in Iowa Falls with more staff, the expansion of Brownells in Grinnell along Interstate I-80, and the expansion of JBS Swift & Co. in Marshalltown. Another large employer is planning to reopen, too. As mentioned, Iowa Quality Beef is in the process of reopening in Tama.

Table 21: Top 20 Growing Industries by Employment

Industry	Projected Employment in 2018	Total Growth	% Change
<i>Nursing and Residential Care Facilities</i>	2,465	460	22.9
<i>Educational Services</i>	5,170	430	9.1
<i>Self Employed and Unpaid Family Workers</i>	4,690	330	7.6
<i>Ambulatory Health Care Services</i>	1,515	270	21.7
<i>Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services</i>	995	210	26.8
<i>Local Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals</i>	3,230	200	6.6
<i>Administrative and Support Services</i>	1,145	190	19.9
<i>Hospitals</i>	1,545	165	12.0
<i>General Merchandise Stores</i>	1,120	155	16.1
<i>Specialty Trade Contractors</i>	1,040	150	16.9
<i>Wood Product Manufacturing</i>	740	130	21.3
<i>Truck Transportation</i>	785	130	19.8
<i>Social Assistance</i>	635	130	25.7
<i>Religious, Grantmaking, Civic, Professional Organizations</i>	1,040	95	10.0
<i>Transportation Equipment Manufacturing</i>	595	60	11.2
<i>Food Service and Drinking Places</i>	2,185	60	2.8
<i>Management of Companies and Enterprises</i>	405	55	15.7
<i>Repair and Maintenance</i>	455	50	12.3
<i>Credit Intermediation and Related Activities</i>	750	45	6.4
<i>Insurance Carriers and Related Activities</i>	935	45	5.1

Note: Projections are based on estimates of employment in 2008.

Source: Iowa Workforce Development, 2011

RETAIL LEAKAGE ANALYSIS

On an annual basis, the Iowa State University Department of Economics completes a retail trade analysis report for each county in Iowa. This report includes retail sales and economic trend data that have been adjusted for inflation to ensure accurate historic comparison. Data from the fiscal year 2001 retail trade analysis reports from the Iowa State University reports are used to analyze retail sales and the extent of retail leakage in Region 6 counties.

Average Sales per Capita and Income

Looking at the sales per capita or the average sales per person in Region 6 counties, Marshall and Hardin County have the highest per capita sales in the region in fiscal years 2010 and 2011. Poweshiek County has per capita sales that are less than 300 dollars fewer than Marshall and Hardin County, but Tama County’s per capita sales were significantly lower at \$3,891. There is an approximately \$4,000 difference in per capital sales between Tama County and the remaining Region 6 counties. Refer to Table 22.

Table 22: Estimated Sales per Capita (In Dollars)

	2010	2011	% Change
Hardin	\$8,490	\$8,034	-5.40%
Marshall	\$8,147	\$8,054	-1.10%
Poweshiek	\$7,828	\$7,787	-0.05%
Tama	\$4,102	\$3,891	-5.20%

Note: Estimated sales are adjusted to 2011 dollars to account for inflation.

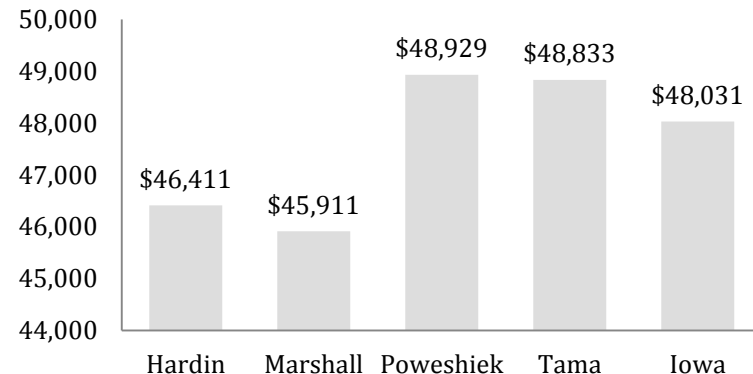
Source: Iowa State University, 2012

Compared to the entire state, the average sales per capita in Region 6 are comparatively low. In fiscal year 2011, the sales per capita were estimated to be \$10,757. Iowa’s sales per capita were almost \$3,000 higher than Marshall and Hardin County (Iowa State University Department of Economics, 2012).

Notice that all Region 6 counties experienced a decrease in average sales per capita from fiscal year 2010 to 2011. Hardin and Poweshiek County had the greatest percentage loss of -5.40 and -0.05 percent, respectively. Marshall County experienced just over one percent decrease, and Poweshiek County’s sales per capita decreased less than one-tenth of a percent. Refer to Table 22.

Median household income may sometimes explain the differences in average sales per capital, but that is not the case for Region 6 counties. Marshall County has the highest average sales per capital in the region but also the lowest median household income. Refer to Figure 11.

Figure 11: Median Household Income



Source: Iowa State University, 2012

The median household income is the highest in Poweshiek County followed by Tama County, and both are just below \$49,000. The median household income for Iowa is lower at just over \$48,000. Marshall County has the lowest median household income in the region, which is \$46,411. Hardin County's median household income is slightly higher at \$46,411. Refer to Figure 11.

Estimated Sales Leakage

Sales leakage is estimated by comparing the expected average sales per capita with the actual average sales per capita in an area. In this case, the research referenced based expected sales on similar counties in Iowa (Iowa State University Department of Economics, 2012). Actual sales leakage estimated for Region 6 counties shows an increase of several millions dollars in lost sales from 2010 to 2011. The greatest increase in sales leakage occurred in Hardin County with a nearly \$10 million increase. Refer to Table 23.

Table 23: Estimated Sales Leakage (In Millions of Dollars)

	2010	2011
Hardin	-31.2	-40.4
Marshall	-90.5	-94.9
Poweshiek	-50.4	-52.6
Tama	-101.9	-105.6

Source: Iowa State University, 2012

Of all Region 6 counties, Tama County had the largest estimated sales leakage, which was over \$105 million in 2011. Marshall County's estimated retail sales leakage was approximately \$10 million less. The estimated sales leakage in Hardin and Poweshiek County were significantly less with an estimated \$40.4 million and \$52.6 million sales leakage, respectively. Refer to Table 23.

One major factor to consider in the analysis of retail sales leakage is the percentage of workers in an area who commute outside of the area for work. People who work outside of their home area may take advantage of the retail options in the area where they work or along their route home (Iowa State University Department of Economics, 2012). Among Region 6 Counties, Tama County had the highest percentage of workers who commuted to another county for work, nearly 68 percent. Tama County also had the highest estimated sales leakage in the region. Refer to Tables 23 and 24.

Table 24: Percentage of Employed Residents Commuting to another County for Work

Hardin	49.9%
Marshall	41.1%
Poweshiek	45.8%
Tama	67.5%

Note: Data is based on 2009 U.S. Census Bureau Commuting Patterns.

Source: Iowa State University, 2012

The magnitude of estimated sales leakage in Hardin, Marshall, and Poweshiek County is not logically explained by the percentage of workers who commute to another county work since Marshall County has the second highest estimated sales leakage but the smallest percentage of workers who commute. One factor to consider is proximity to cities with significantly more retail options. The Des Moines area is just an hour drive from Poweshiek and Marshall County. Waterloo/Cedar Falls is an hour drive from Hardin County. Cedar Rapids is an hour drive from Marshall and Tama County. In addition, online shopping options have increased significantly in the past decade (Iowa State University Department of Economics, 2012).

Local Retail Options

There are several large retailers and downtown or specialty shopping areas in Region 6. Examples of large retailers for the region include Wal-Mart, K-Mart, Hy-Vee, Menards, and Shopko. Cities with downtown or specialty shopping areas include Marshalltown, Grinnell, Iowa Falls, and Dysart.

Of all cities in the region, Marshalltown has the most retail options with the majority of large retailers including Wal-Mart, K-Mart, Hy-Vee, and Menards. Marshalltown has a small shopping mall that has recently lost its anchor, Menards, due to relocation of the store. Marshalltown also has a downtown area with restaurants, retail shops, Mexican grocery, and other businesses. Several spaces in the downtown have changed ownership and future plans are not certain.

Aside from large retailers like Wal-Mart and Hy-Vee, Grinnell has a thriving downtown with a diverse mix of restaurants, retail shops, bars, and other businesses. Grinnell residents, businesses, and Grinnell College students are the primary support for the downtown area. Events encouraging residents to support local businesses are sponsored on a regular basis. Iowa Falls also has a thriving downtown that is small but contains a variety of specialty shops and businesses.

A unique attraction in Region 6 is the downtown shopping area in Dysart, a small city in Tama County. Dysart has several specialty, boutique-type shops and restaurants that attract people from all over the region and Iowa. Several events are held each year with a theme and promotions at local businesses. In addition, a local volunteer group, the Hospitality and Tourism Team or the H.A.T. Team, organizes tours of Dysart and coordinates with the local businesses.

Entrance to Shopping Mall in Marshalltown



Photo Source: www.waymarking.com, 2012

Specialty Retail Shopping Area in Dysart



Downtown Dysart in August 2012

INDUSTRY CLUSTERS

Two primary industry clusters, food production and processing and renewable energy production, were identified in Region 6 based on economic development and investment trends in the region. Economic development professionals who work with existing and potential businesses in the region were the primary sources of information. In addition, the Regional Development Committee was consulted to identify likely industry clusters in the region.

To begin, an economic cluster is a concentration of businesses in a geographic area that are tightly interconnected through material inputs or information. These businesses are also tied to a particular industry. The prime example of an economic cluster is the high concentration of technology companies in Silicon Valley.

For an economic development strategy, it is important to identify economic clusters because geographic concentrations of businesses in a particular industry often foster greater productivity. For example, material inputs can be moved efficiently or information and knowledge can be shared face-to-face. Economic clusters can also result in greater national and global competitiveness, which is extremely important in the current global economy.

Food Production and Processing

Since Region 6 is small in terms of geographic area and population, its economic advantages reflect those of the entire state of Iowa. Commodity crop production, primarily corn and soybeans, and livestock production are the main economic activities in Region 6, as is the case across rural Iowa. Land in Region 6 is used predominately for agriculture because the soil conditions are ideal for crop

production. In addition, the rural nature of Region 6 and exemption of agriculture in zoning in Iowa is ideal for livestock production.

It is important to note, the most recent Census of Agriculture, which is maintained by the United State Department of Agriculture, was completed in 2007 so available data for Region 6 is not recent enough to complete a detailed analysis of recent trends. Most recent agriculture and industry data is only available at the statewide level. This analysis includes the best data available.

Based on the 2007 Census of Agriculture, the number of farms in Region 6 has increased since 2002. The average size of farms has also increased since 2002. Being a creature of the global economy, the value of commodity crops and livestock has steadily increased making production more profitable. The market for agricultural products does vary due to weather and general demand for certain products. For example, the drought in 2012 resulted in abnormal conditions, yields, and prices that directly affected crop producers and indirectly affected producers of livestock and animal products. Another example is the increased production of ethanol and high fructose corn syrup, which has subsequently increased the demand for corn.

In 2010, both commodity crops and livestock were in the top 25 exports, in terms of value, for Iowa according to the State Data Center of Iowa. Soybeans were the second highest value export at \$513 million. Swine meat was the third highest value at \$436 million. Corn was the fourth highest value export at \$401 million. Variations in soybean and swine products are also included in the top 25 exports for Iowa.

Aside from being high value exports for Iowa, commodity crops and livestock are the inputs for the food processing industry in Region 6 and Iowa. There are several meat processing facilities in the region

that use inputs from farmers and large scale operators in Region 6. A primary example is JBS & Swift Co. in Marshalltown, which is a major pork processing plant that has recently been expanded.

In addition, the headquarters for Iowa Select Farms and Heartland Pork are located in Hardin County where pork production is increasingly concentrated. A beef processing facility is currently in the process of reopening in Tama County after closing about a decade ago. Overall consider the primary input system—having large scale meat processing facilities in the region requires large scale production of livestock, and large scale livestock production requires large amounts of grain.

Aside from grain and livestock producers, there are many businesses that support food production and processing. Businesses or individuals that provide seeds, fertilizer and other chemical inputs, livestock feed additives, general farm supplies, agriculture implements, medical care for animals, and continuing education are also major supporters of food production and processing in Region 6 and Iowa. An example of a major business in Region 6 dedicated to crop production inputs is a large Pioneer Seed facility in Poweshiek County. Throughout the region, though, there are agriculture input suppliers and implement dealers of various sizes to support producers in the region.

The grain elevator network and freight industry are also major elements of the food production and processing industry. Most cities in Region 6 have a grain elevator or major grain storage facility. Several major railroads and small semi-truck firms operate in the region to ensure access from the farm to market.

On the opposite end of the food production and processing spectrum, there is a movement in Region 6 and Iowa toward more production of food products for local and regional consumption.

These food products include all types that are suitable for Iowa's climate. Through the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture, regional groups have been formed to strengthen the existing local food system in Region 6 and Iowa. As the Hispanic and Latino population have increased in Region 6, local food groups and Marshalltown Community College are exploring new opportunities to supply consumers with local food options while creating entrepreneurial opportunities.

Economic development professionals in Region 6 indicate a continued interest from food production and processing businesses to locate in the region. Proximity to inputs, local knowledge, and a well-connected freight transportation system provide the ideal conditions for operating a profitable business. Overall, future growth in the food production and processing industry is likely in Region 6.

Renewable Energy Production

With large scale corn production in the region and an extensive freight transportation system, ethanol production is extremely important to Iowa's economy. In 2008, approximately 26 percent of ethanol production in the United States was based on Iowa. In addition, the ethanol industry added approximately \$12 billion to Iowa's gross domestic product, which was about 9 percent in 2008 (Iowa Renewable Fuels Association, 2012).

In Region 6, a major ethanol refinery is located in Iowa Falls and expansion is currently planned. The facility currently has a capacity of 102 million gallons. There is also an ethanol refinery in Steamboat Rock with a capacity of 30 million gallons (Iowa Renewable Fuels Association, 2012). It is important to note that grain production is not only important for livestock production in Region 6 but also ethanol production.

Another important renewable energy source in Iowa is wind. Generation of wind energy began in Iowa in the early 1990s with legislation that encouraged large energy consumers to install wind turbines in order to reduce their load on local utility providers. The first large wind turbine was installed by the Spirit Lake School District in 1992 (Wind Utility Consulting, PC and Wind Management, LLC, 2008). In 2010, Iowa ranked second in the nation in wind generation output with a total of 3,675 megawatts and 2,534 wind turbines. Nearly 20 percent of Iowa's total power output was from wind generation, which was the highest in the nation in 2010 (Iowa Department of Economic Development, 2012).

Wind energy is produced throughout most of Region 6 in several wind turbine developments or wind farms of various sizes. The largest wind farm in Region 6 is Laurel Mountain in Marshall County near Laurel, which is operated by AES and MidAmerican Energy. Installation of turbines began in 2011, and the full wind farm was split into two phases. Part one involved the installation of 61 wind turbines with a 97,000 kW capacity, and part two involves installation of 52 turbines with a 119,600 kW capacity. Consumers Energy, also in Marshall County, installed two wind turbines in 2004 (The Wind Power, 2012).

Another large wind turbine development, the Vienna wind farm project, is located in Marshall and Tama County near Gladbrook. The wind farm contains 45 wind turbines with 25 located in Marshall County and the remaining 20 located in Tama County. The operator for this wind farm is MidAmerican Energy. There is another wind farm in Marshall County near State Center.

It should be noted, in 2010, Marshall County passed an ordinance establishing tax incentives for wind power generation facilities in addition to the tax incentives offered by the state of Iowa. This ordinance likely spurred the development of several wind farms in

the county. To the county's benefit, the ordinance also establishes that a portion of the tax revenue generated by wind farms will be paid to Marshall County.

Marshall and Tama County are the primary wind power generating counties in the region. In Hardin County, the New Providence School District installed one wind turbine in 2002 (The Wind Power, 2012). Currently there are no wind turbines and or wind farms in Poweshiek County.

Moving Wind Turbine Blade through Toledo



Photo Source: Toledo Chronicle, 2012

Studies have been completed throughout the region to determine the feasibility of additional wind energy production. There are future plans for major investment in wind energy production in all Region 6 counties except Poweshiek County. Although it should be noted, the future stability of the wind energy industry is not entirely certain due to the possibility of losing wind energy tax credits. Compared to other regions in Iowa, Region 6 would not be affected as negatively since none of the major wind turbine manufacturers are located in the region.

It is important to mention a less well-known renewable energy that is produced in Tama County. AgBio Power, located in Tama, is a company that produces gasification units that extract energy from biomass materials through gasification or semi-combustion. The energy produced can be used onsite to offset the load on local utility providers. Typically agricultural and industrial wastes can be used to produce energy through gasification. This type of energy production is ideal because it diverts solid waste from landfills and saves companies waste and energy costs.

In addition to biofuels and wind energy, a natural gas power plant is currently in the permitting process to be located in Marshall County south of Marshalltown. Although not renewable energy, natural gas is one of the cleaner forms of energy that could be used for power generation. The permitting process for this power plant will take several years so construction will not occur for quite a long time.

IMPORTANT ECONOMY AND WORKFORCE CONSIDERATIONS

- ✓ Total employment in Region 6 was nearly 40,000 workers in 2010. Half of workers are employed in Marshall County with less than 10,000 people employed in each of the remaining counties in region.
- ✓ The largest employment sector in the region is government, which includes public education and health institutions, and the second largest sector is manufacturing. The other major employment sectors in the region are trade and education and health services.
- ✓ The industry sectors with the least employed workers are information, natural resources, and transportation.
- ✓ The major private employers in the region are located in Marshall and Poweshiek County, which are the only counties in the region with population growth in the most recent decade.
- ✓ Most industry sectors experienced a decrease in employment, but certain industries increased employment by five percent or more. Most notable are the professional and business services sector and the agriculture, natural resources, and mining sector.
- ✓ The other major industry sector that experienced growth in total employment is the manufacturing sector, but the increase was just five jobs.
- ✓ In 2010, Over 95 percent of employers in the region had less than 50 workers, and there are eight employers in the region that had 500 or more workers. The eight largest employers in the region supported over 21 percent of the jobs in the region. Employers with less than 50 workers support 45.5 percent of jobs in the region.
- ✓ From 2009 to 2010, average annual wage increased by 1.7 percent to \$34,973 for all industries. There were modest salary increases in all industry sectors in the region from 2009 to 2010 except in the construction sector and professional and business services sector.
- ✓ Unemployment ranges from as low as 4.9 in Poweshiek County and as high as 6.3 in Marshall County in 2012. Poweshiek County is the only county in the region with an unemployment rate lower than the state of Iowa.

- ✓ From 2009 to 2010, 1.39 percent or a total of 553 jobs were lost in region. The industry sector with the greatest percentage loss from 2009 to 2010 was transportation and utilities, and the industries with highest losses in absolute numbers are the trade sector and the government sector.
- ✓ The two industry sectors that are projected to grow the most in terms of percentage include the professional, scientific, and technical services sector and the social assistance sector.
- ✓ The two industries that are projected to grow the most in terms of total employment include the nursing and residential care facilities sector and the educational services sector.
- ✓ Based on local information, there will likely be growth in the number of jobs in the region. Several large employers are currently or planning to expand.
- ✓ Retail sales leakage estimated for Region 6 counties shows an increase of several millions dollars in lost sales from 2010 to 2011. The high levels of retail sales leakage are likely due to proximity of cities with significantly more retail options.
- ✓ The median household income is the highest in Poweshiek County followed by Tama County, and both are just below \$49,000. The median household income for Iowa is lower at just over \$48,000. Marshall County has the lowest median household income in the region, which is \$46,411. Hardin County's median household income is slightly higher at \$46,411.
- ✓ Two primary industry clusters, food production and processing and renewable energy production, were identified in Region 6 based on economic development and investment trends in the region.
- ✓ Commodity crop production, primarily corn and soybeans, and livestock production are the main economic activities in Region 6, as is the case across rural Iowa.
- ✓ There are several meat processing facilities in the region that use inputs from farmers and large scale operators in Region 6. One meat processing facility is currently in the process of being reopened.
- ✓ On the opposite end of the food production and processing spectrum, there is a movement in Region 6 and Iowa toward more production of food products for local and regional consumption.
- ✓ Wind energy is produced throughout most of Region 6 in several wind turbine developments or wind farms of various sizes.

HOUSING

Housing quality and affordability are extremely important to consider in a comprehensive economic development strategy. The people who live and work in Region 6 should be able to choose from a variety of housing options that are good quality and affordable. In addition, an adequate housing stock is essential to attract new residents and businesses to the region. Note that current housing data is fairly limited due to the simplification of the 2010 U.S Census so this housing analysis will not include an in-depth discussion of the physical characteristics of the region's housing stock.

HOUSING STOCK

Total Housing Units

From 2000 to 2010 the total number of housing units in Region 6 increased by 2.4 percent or 183 units, but the total population for the region decreased in the most recent decade. See Table 25. From 2000 to 2010, the Region 6 population decreased by nearly two percent (State Data Center of Iowa, 2012). This negative relationship is likely due to the average household size of both owner-occupied and renter-occupied units decreasing from 2000 to 2010 in Iowa and all Region 6 counties except Marshall and Tama County. See Tables 26 and 27 on the following page.

Comparing counties in the region, the total housing units in Poweshiek County increased the most in terms of percentage, 4.6 percent. This is an increase of over 500 housing units in the county. The total housing units in Marshall County also increased by over 500 units, but the total population and recent growth is larger than Poweshiek County. The average household in Marshall County

increased from 2000 to 2010, which may account for nearly equal growth in the number of housing units despite greater population growth. See Table 25.

Table 25: Total Housing Units

	2000	2010	% Change
<i>Hardin</i>	8,318	8,224	-1.1
<i>Marshall</i>	16,324	16,831	3.1
<i>Poweshiek</i>	8,556	8,949	4.6
<i>Tama</i>	7,583	7,766	2.4
<i>Region 6</i>	40,781	41,770	2.4
<i>Iowa</i>	1,232,511	1,336,417	8.4

Source: State Data Center of Iowa, 2012

Hardin County is the only county with a decrease in total housing units, 1.1 percent, which decreased the total housing units by 94 units. Hardin County's total population also decreased from 2000 to 2010. On the other hand, Tama County's population decreased while total housing units increased. Again, this is likely due to the average household size decreasing during the same period of time. See Tables 26 and 27 on the following page.

Comparing statewide, Region 6 was outpaced by Iowa in total housing unit growth from 2000 to 2010. Iowa's total housing units grew by 8.4 percent compared to Region 6's 2.4 percent growth. Overall, certain areas in Iowa grew more in terms of population and average household size decreased throughout the state.

Table 26: Average Household Size of Owner-occupied Units

	2000	2010	% Change
<i>Hardin</i>	2.41	2.32	-3.7
<i>Marshall</i>	2.56	2.59	1.2
<i>Poweshiek</i>	2.45	2.37	-3.3
<i>Tama</i>	2.55	2.51	-1.6
<i>Iowa</i>	2.57	2.52	-1.9

Table 27: Average Household Size of Renter-occupied Units

	2000	2010	% Change
<i>Hardin</i>	2.19	2.16	-1.4
<i>Marshall</i>	2.26	2.36	4.4
<i>Poweshiek</i>	2.08	2.08	0.0
<i>Tama</i>	2.35	2.45	4.3
<i>Iowa</i>	2.15	2.14	-0.5

Source: State Data Center of Iowa, 2012 (Tables 26 and 27)

The trend in household size in Region 6 and Iowa is overall negative, but some counties experienced an increase or no change. In both owner- and renter-occupied housing, Marshall County’s average household size increased. Looking at renter-occupied units in Poweshiek County, the average household size remained stable. See Tables 26 and 27.

Housing Tenure

Over 80 percent of the housing units in all Region 6 counties were occupied in 2010. Marshall County is the only county in the region with occupancy that exceeds statewide occupancy. Over 92 percent of Marshall County’s housing units were occupied compared to 91.4 percent at the state level in 2010. In both 2000 and 2010, Marshall County had the highest percentage of housing units occupied in the region. See Table 28.

Table 28: Housing Occupancy by Percent of Total Housing Units

	2000	2010
<i>Hardin</i>	91.7	88.7
<i>Marshall</i>	94.0	92.3
<i>Poweshiek</i>	86.5	84.4
<i>Tama</i>	92.5	89.5
<i>Iowa</i>	93.2	91.4

Source: State Data Center of Iowa, 2012

From 2000 to 2010, the percentage of housing occupancy in all Region 6 counties and Iowa decreased, which may indicate excess housing in some parts of the region. A possible issue may be that the available housing is not in high demand due to either quality or affordability. The population in certain counties has decreased so general demand for housing has likely decreased in those areas.

Age of Housing

Compared to the statewide median age for owner- and renter-occupied housing, Region 6 housing stock is older. Tama County has the oldest median year built, 1950 and 1952, for both owner- and renter-occupied housing in the region. Poweshiek County has the youngest median year, 1962 and 1971, for both types of housing. See Tables 29 and 30.

Table 29: Median Year Built for Owner-occupied Units (2006-2010 Estimate)

	Median Year Built	Margin of Error
<i>Hardin</i>	1954	(+/-) 3
<i>Marshall</i>	1956	(+/-) 2
<i>Poweshiek</i>	1962	(+/-) 2
<i>Tama</i>	1950	(+/-) 4
<i>Iowa</i>	1963	(+/-) 1

Source: State Data Center of Iowa, 2012

Table 30: Median Year Built for Renter-Occupied Units (2006-2010 Estimate)

	Median Year Built	Margin of Error
Hardin	1959	(+/-) 5
Marshall	1960	(+/-) 6
Poweshiek	1971	(+/-) 4
Tama	1952	(+/-) 7
Iowa	1969	(+/-) 1

Source: State Data Center of Iowa, 2012

Since the Midwest was initially developed with primarily single-family homes, which are typically owner-occupied units, the median year built for owner-occupied units is earlier than the median year built for renter-occupied units. Of course single-family homes and not just multi-family structures are included in the total number of renter-occupied units, but recent data is not available for housing types in the region. Throughout the region, though, there is a general recognized need for higher quality rental options and more single-family homes that are modestly sized and priced for young professionals and families. Currently, there are projects in progress or being proposed to address this issue throughout the region.

New Construction LEED Certified House in Eldora



The original house was torn down and rebuilt using federal funds in partnership with Ellsworth Community College in Eldora in 2010.

Overall, Hardin, Marshall, and Tama County have older housing, and this is evident when traveling through Region 6. Certain cities in the region have noticeably older housing, especially the smallest cities. Considering housing quality, having an older housing stock does not necessarily suggest that housing in the region is poor quality. Like all cities, certain areas consist of well-maintained homes while others contain blight. Most cities in Region 6, though, have expressed concern regarding blighted properties.

Cost of Housing

Region 6 is considered an affordable place to live in Iowa since the region consists of primarily small cities and the dominant land use is agriculture. Comparing the median monthly housing cost, all Region 6 counties have median housing costs that are less than the state level median housing cost. The highest median monthly cost in the region, which is in Marshall County, was 40 dollars less than Iowa.

The least expensive county in Region 6 is Hardin County with an estimated median monthly housing cost less than 600 dollars. Tama County’s estimated median cost is 50 dollars higher. Although Poweshiek County has comparatively newer housing, the estimated median cost is slightly less than Marshall County. See Table 31.

Table 31: Median Monthly Housing Cost (2006-2010 Estimate)

	Estimate	Margin of Error
<i>Hardin</i>	\$586	(+/-) \$32
<i>Marshall</i>	\$693	(+/-) \$25
<i>Poweshiek</i>	\$683	(+/-) \$29
<i>Tama</i>	\$651	(+/-) \$33
<i>Iowa</i>	\$733	(+/-) \$3

Source: State Data Center of Iowa, 2012

Please note the data used are estimates with a margin of error. Data is more consistently available for Marshalltown since it is a larger city for Iowa and the largest in the region. For the remaining cities and counties in the region, five year estimates are the most readily available data so this is used to ensure proper comparison.

It is also important to consider the cost of housing in terms of household income. Median housing costs can be low compared to the state, but if people who live in the region are spending a high percentage of their income to maintain housing there is a definite affordability issue. For this analysis, only median monthly owner costs are used since reliable rental cost data is not available.

The median monthly owner costs as a percentage of household income for Region 6 counties achieve a similar ranking of affordability in the region. Hardin County was estimated to have the lowest median monthly housing costs and the percentage of household is also the lowest in Hardin County. On the high end, Marshall County had the highest estimated median monthly housing cost and also the highest percentage of household income. See Table 32.

Table 32: Median Monthly Owner Costs as Percent of Household Income (2006-2010 Estimate)

	%	Margin of Error
<i>Hardin</i>	19.8	(+/-) 1.1
<i>Marshall</i>	22.4	(+/-) 0.7
<i>Poweshiek</i>	20.0	(+/-) 1.0
<i>Tama</i>	21.8	(+/-) 1.4
<i>Iowa</i>	21.3	(+/-) 0.1

Note: Monthly owner costs are for housing units with a mortgage.

Source: State Data Center of Iowa, 2012

Based on housing costs as a percentage of household income, most Region 6 counties are relatively affordable. All counties except Marshall have percentages lower than the state level, and compared to nationwide level, Iowa and Region 6 are relatively affordable. The 2006 to 2010 estimate of median monthly costs as percent of household income is 25 percent with a low margin of error so all Region 6 counties and Iowa have a lower percentage even with the margin of error (State Data Center of Iowa, 2012).

IMPORTANT HOUSING CONSIDERATIONS

- ✓ From 2000 to 2010 the total number of housing units in Region 6 increased, but the total population for the region decreased in the most recent decade.
- ✓ The average household size of both owner-occupied and renter-occupied units decreasing from 2000 to 2010 in Iowa and all Region 6 counties except Marshall and Tama County.
- ✓ Region 6 was outpaced by Iowa in total housing unit growth from 2000 to 2010. Iowa's total housing units grew by 8.4 percent compared to Region 6's 2.4 percent growth.
- ✓ Hardin County is the only county with a decrease in total housing units and total population from 2000 to 2010. The total housing units in Marshall and Poweshiek County increased by nearly the same amount, but the total population and recent growth in Marshall County is larger than Poweshiek County.
- ✓ The trend in household size in Region 6 and Iowa is overall negative, but some counties experienced an increase or no change. In both owner- and renter-occupied housing, Marshall County's average household size increased. In Poweshiek County, the average household size of renter-occupied units remained stable.
- ✓ Over 80 percent of the housing units in all Region 6 counties were occupied in 2010. Marshall County is the only county in the region with occupancy that exceeds statewide occupancy.
- ✓ From 2000 to 2010, housing occupancy in all Region 6 counties and Iowa decreased. A possible issue may be that the available housing is not in high demand due to either quality or affordability. The population in certain counties has decreased so general demand for housing has likely decreased in those areas.
- ✓ Compared to the statewide median age for owner- and renter-occupied housing, Region 6 housing stock is older. Tama County has the oldest median year built for both owner- and renter-occupied housing in the region, and Poweshiek County has the youngest median year for both types of housing.
- ✓ All Region 6 counties have median housing costs that are less than the state level. The highest median monthly cost in the region, which is in Marshall County, was 40 dollars less than Iowa.

- ✓ The least expensive county in Region 6 is Hardin County with an estimated median monthly housing cost less than 600 dollars. The percentage of household income is also the lowest in Hardin County from 2006 to 2010.
- ✓ Marshall County had the highest estimated median monthly housing cost and also the highest percentage of household income from 2006 to 2010.
- ✓ Based on housing costs as a percentage of household income, most Region 6 counties are relatively affordable. All counties except Marshall have percentages lower than the state level, and compared to nationwide level, Iowa and Region 6 are relatively affordable.

TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

The transportation system allows people and goods to move within and outside Region 6, which is extremely important to the region's economy. The Region 6 transportation system contains several modes including basic automobile transportation, semi-truck and rail freight, public transit, municipal airports, pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, and pipelines.

For this strategy, the background and analysis of the transportation system in Region 6 will focus on the basic components of the system and discussions with staff in Region 6 counties and cities regarding current conditions, future plans, and perceived challenges. Please note the long-range transportation plan for Region 6 will be updated after this Strategy is developed.

More transportation data and detailed analysis will be available in September 2013. The forthcoming long-range transportation plan will focus in detail on transportation access, demand, flow, and pipelines. Where appropriate, the Strategy will be updated with information from the long-range transportation plan.

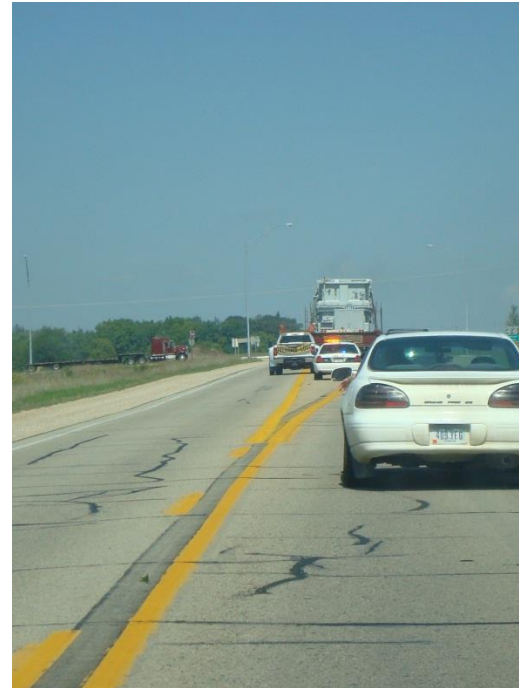
ROAD AND BRIDGE NETWORK

Highway System

A highway system connects Region 6 counties and Region 6 to the state of Iowa and beyond. U.S. Highways 65 and 63, and State Highways 14, 21, and 146 run north-south; U.S. Highway 20, State Highways 175, 6, and 30, and Interstate 80 all serve the Region from east to west. To make travel east and west more efficient, U.S. Highway 30 has recently been widened to four lanes.

A bypass of Tama and Toledo was also added in Tama County. Lastly, State Highway 330 is a four-lane highway that connects the region from Marshall County to Ankeny, Altoona, Bondurant, and the Des Moines area. These major roads are the primary routes used by private individuals and semi-trucks traveling within and through the region.

Oversized Semi-truck Load on Highway 14



Northbound traffic on Highway 14 followed a large semi-truck shipment being escorted by the Marshall County Sherriff's Department in August 2012.

Road and Bridge System

It is important to note the responsibilities of counties and cities in Region 6 since the majority of roads in the region are locally controlled. For all locally controlled roads, either county or city, the local government's primary responsibilities are maintaining surfaces, structural integrity of bridges and culverts, and clearing the public right-of-way of debris and snow. The current challenge and priority for both counties and cities in the region is maintaining the current road and bridge system to ensure safe and efficient travel.

The challenge in maintaining the existing road system is sufficient funding in the budget to complete all needed repairs and maintenance. In all cities and counties in the region, road and bridge projects are being prioritized so highly traveled routes or potential bottlenecks in the system have funding priority.

The method for project prioritization varies throughout the region from a case-by-case method to the use of an algorithm to determine where investments in the system should be completed. In the case of high priority and insufficient funding, several cities and some counties in the region have used bonding to fund large projects that can no longer be deferred to the future. In cities and counties that have not yet bonded to finance projects, most are considering this option.

Aside from overall funding, there are specific issues in maintaining the Region 6 road and bridge system for safe and efficient travel. Since Region 6 is primarily rural, maintenance issues include single-axle wagons, usually an agricultural implement, which places an extremely heavy point load on roads and bridges. Bridges are especially a challenge due to posted load limits increasingly being ignored by implement operators.

Another general maintenance issue in the region is semi-truck traffic hauling extra heavy loads or not adhering to designated truck routes. Damage to residential roads and the potential hazards posed by semi-trucks, e.g., noise, tight turn radii, hazardous materials, etc., requiring avoidable maintenance and repair, residential complaints, or emergency response.

A specific issue is the movement of wind turbine components either through the region or into local wind farms. For each wind turbine there is usually 12 semi-truck loads. Although a permit is required for semi-trucks hauling wind turbine components, the fee is 10 dollars per load, which likely does not cover the administrative costs to process the permit. It should be noted, instead of a flat fee determined by the state, other types of over-sized semi-truck loads can be assessed an analysis fee if the particular load or route has not been studied in the past.

Natural hazards and their effect on travel in is another major issue in the region. Generally, any water crossing in the road system has the potential for flooding. In Hardin, Marshall, and Tama County, a major source of flooding is the Iowa River and associated creeks. These waterways can cause complete closure of bridges due to complete inundation and required inspection.

High Water near U.S. Highway 63 in Tama County



High water from the Iowa River in Tama County in March 2010

Flash flooding is cited as a persistent issue in all Region 6 counties and cities. Although, each occurrence is typically short and only occurs during heavy rain events. Typically, flash flooding only incurs extra maintenance on gravel surfaces.

Hardin County

There are no large or unusually expensive projects planned for the Hardin County road and bridge network. The priority throughout the county is maintaining the existing system and paving fairly small sections of roads throughout the network. Overall, roads and bridges are the primary concern for the future.

A large project that was recently completed in Hardin County is the replacement of the bridge in Iowa Falls on U.S. Highway 65/Oak Street, which spans the Iowa River. Since this bridge is along a state route, the Iowa Department of Transportation financed and completed the replacement of this bridge. Keeping the historic and natural character of the area, the bridge was designed with architectural elements in the spirit of the origin bridge design.

New Oak Street Bridge in Iowa Falls



Photo Source: www.historicbridges.com, 2012

Marshall County

Maintaining the existing road and bridge system is also the main priority in Marshall County. Several large projects have been completed or are currently in progress to restore pavement conditions throughout the county. Most notably, Marshalltown has replaced several streets in the city—Center Street, Olive Street, Nevada Street, and 13th Street. Techniques for prolonging the life of certain streets are also being used. In the past, road maintenance has been deferred in certain areas, and now bonding is being used to finance improvement projects.

13th Street Construction in Marshalltown



Photo Source: Morning Glory Bakery, 2012

Currently, bridges are a major concern in Marshall County. In the case of several bridges, regular maintenance is no longer sufficient to preserve safety. Specifically, four bridges with close proximity located on North Center Street need to be completely replaced with an estimated cost of over \$5 million, which is equivalent to approximately ten years of the county's bridge budget.

These bridges are extremely important because they provide access to and from Marshalltown over the Iowa River on the north side of the city. These bridges also provide access to Marshalltown's water treatment facility that serves the city and Central Iowa Water Association. The water association's customer base covers not just Marshall County but also Tama, Story, Hardin, and Grundy Counties. In addition the largest bridge that spans the Iowa River serves as a support for a 24 inch water main that feeds Marshalltown and a natural gas line that provides power to the water treatment facility.

North Center Street Bridge and Water Main



Photo Source: www.bridgehunter.com, 2012

Another important project in Marshall County is the widening of U.S. Highway 30 from two to four lanes across the entire county, east and west. Before 2010, stretches of the highway were just two lanes with a posted speed limit of 55 miles per hour. This project, which is part of a larger highway widening project, was completed by the Iowa Department of Transportation. Overall, the benefits of widening the highway include an increase in posted speed limit to 65 miles per hour and the ability to pass slow moving vehicles and agriculture implements, which decreases overall travel time.

Poweshiek County

The road and bridge system in Poweshiek County is unique in the region, because Interstate 80 runs through the south side of the county and bridge issues are minimal since there are considerably less bridges than other Region 6 counties. Despite these differences, Poweshiek County does have funding constraints like all counties in the region. Necessary maintenance and replacements are prioritized to ensure funds are used efficiently. It should be noted that rural bridges with posted weight restrictions are still an issue in Poweshiek County. The posted restrictions are often ignored resulting in damage further damage and instability structures.

Poweshiek County is also unique because of a partnership between the county and City of Grinnell to acquire funds for replacing bridge on 20th Street that spans the Iowa Interstate railroad line. The county is ineligible for bridge replacement funds so the City of Grinnell will annex the bridge in order to receive the replacement funds. The project would also involve reconstruction of sections of 20th Street and 1st Avenue. The county and City would jointly finance the project, but the county would be responsible for the majority of costs not covered by bridge replacement funds. Overall, this partnership serves as an example for what could jointly be accomplished in other areas of Region 6.

Tama County

Similar to all Region 6 counties, maintenance of the existing road and bridge system in Tama County is a priority and challenge. Funding for road maintenance and repaving is the limiting factor, as is the case in all Region 6, Iowa, and the nation. To efficiently use the existing budget and prolong the life of new pavement, cold in-place recycling of road surfaces is being used where possible.

Aside from roads, specific issues in unincorporated Tama County include several extended closures of bridges due to safety concerns. These bridge closures require rerouting of traffic that can be inconvenient for people who live near the bridge. Overall, there is noticeable deterioration of most bridges in the county, and weight restrictions are posted when load becomes an issue.

A major project that was recently completed in Tama County is the widening of U.S. Highway 30 to four lanes and a bypass of Tama and Toledo. Consequently, U.S. Highways 30 and 63 no longer intersect in Toledo at a four-way signalized intersection. With local support, this project was completed by the Iowa Department of Transportation since the highway is a state route.

U.S. Highway 30 Bypass of Tama and Toledo



Photo Source: Tama News-Herald, 2010

To further highlight, one of the major purposes of widening U.S. Highway 30 was to improve travel times across Iowa, east and west, in order to reduce traffic on Interstate 80. U.S. Highway 30 has also become a heavily traveled commuter route for workers who live in communities along the highway and heavily traveled semi-truck freight route. Aside from widening the highway and increasing the speed limit, the bypass has reduced travel time because traffic is no longer routed through Toledo and Tama. Speeds are reduced through these cities, and there is a signalized intersection, which also slows traffic. Through traffic on U.S. Highway 30 is no longer mixed with local traffic.

FREIGHT TRANSPORTATION

In 2010, 54.4 million tons of freight originated and 42.2 million tons of freight terminated in Iowa. Of all freight originating the state, nearly 80 percent was coal, grain, chemicals, and fertilizers. Note that grain and agricultural chemicals were in the top 25 highest valued export for Iowa in 2010, according to the State Data Center of Iowa. As for freight moving through the state, there was 229 million tons in 2010 (Iowa Department of Transportation, 2012).

Since 1985, rail freight originating in the state increased 160 percent while rail freight terminating in the state increased 99 percent. In addition, freight moving through Iowa increased 129 percent in the same time period. Despite significant increases in rail freight tonnage, net ton-miles tripled and rail-miles decreased from 1985 to 2010 so rail freight has become much more efficient (Iowa Department of Transportation, 2012).

Freight rail, in partnership with the trucking industry, provides intermodal transportation that is critical to the economic health of Iowa. In 2009, nearly 4,000 miles of rail freight track were in operation by 18 companies in Iowa. Between highways, rail lines,

pipelines, and navigable waters, Iowa has approximately 130,000 miles of freight infrastructure. Approximately three percent of Iowa’s freight infrastructure is rail line, and in 2001, 43 percent of Iowa’s freight was carried on rail lines. Leasing a third of total track lines, the Union Pacific Railroad is the primary rail operator in Iowa (Iowa Department of Transportation, 2012).

There are several different types of rail line that are operated throughout Iowa and the nation. Class I rail lines provide the long-haul, interstate service throughout the United States, connecting with Canadian and Mexican lines for international traffic. Class II rail lines haul mid-sized loads for long distance, and Class III or Short Lines serve local freight rail needs. The Region is currently supported by four railroad companies—one Class I, two Class II rail lines, and one Class III. See Table 33.

Table 33: Railroad Service Points in the Region

Company	Cities Served	National Markets	Class
Canadian National	Iowa Falls, Alden, Ackley	Omaha, Chicago	II
Union Pacific	Marshalltown, Tama, Iowa Falls, Grinnell, Buckeye, Gilman, Searsboro	Kansas City, Minneapolis, Duluth, Chicago, Denver, Los Angeles, etc.	I
Iowa Interstate	Brooklyn, Grinnell	Omaha, Chicago	II
Iowa River Railroad	Marshalltown, Ackley, Steamboat Rock, Eldora, Liscomb, Albion, Union	N/A	III

Source: Modified from Region 6 Long-range Transportation Plan, 2007

A rail line closure in the region that should be noted is the Iowa River Rail line that runs 37 miles from Eldora in Hardin County to Marshalltown in Marshall County. This line had limited use in the past and has been fully abandoned. Currently, rail banking and recreational trail opportunities are being explored.

As for operating rail lines, at-grade rail line crossing are a concern in most Region 6 counties and cities that are served by freight rail line. Marshalltown has a large switching yard but viaducts on main streets in the city minimize congestion and potential conflicts with vehicles and pedestrians. Several cities, though, have rail lines and crossings close to developed areas. Safety, primarily derailment and hazardous materials, and noise are the primary concerns. It is the responsibility of the counties and cities to work with the rail line operator to minimize potential conflicts, but feedback indicates this is a frustrating and often futile process.

A major rail line improvement project in the region that is currently in the planning process is a rail line extension in Iowa Falls. The project involves constructing trunk lines to connect the existing Canadian National and Union Pacific Railroad lines outside of Iowa Falls to serve the Iowa Falls Business Park. In addition, mega site certification is being pursued in order to attract large businesses.

Aside from rail lines, semi-trucks are a major freight carrier in Region 6 and Iowa. Semi-truck freight affords greater access since businesses do not need to be located near a rail line to ship or receive goods. Semi-trucks are also more convenient for short distance hauling, especially during the harvest season. Semi-truck freight is especially important in communities that are no longer served by rail lines. Traveling through Region 6 and Iowa, the growth in the semi-truck freight industry is evident. Throughout Iowa, several community colleges have developed semi-truck driving certification programs because drivers are in high-demand.

AIRPORTS

Air travel is an important part of Iowa's transportation system. Airports serve as access points for both people and goods. In a global economy, airports are critical to the development of future markets. For people traveling, general aviation airports provide important access to the national transportation system.

Region 6 currently has six publicly-owned airports located in Marshalltown, Iowa Falls, Grinnell, Traer, Toledo, and Eldora. The airports in Eldora and Toledo are rated as Basic Service II; Traer is rated as Basic Service; Grinnell and Iowa Falls are rated as General Service; and Marshalltown is rated as Enhanced Service. A privately-owned airport located in Ackley, in Hardin County, is available for limited public use.

A common metric for sufficient access to airports is a 30 minute travel time. Most residents in Region 6 are within 30 minutes of an airport, primarily municipal airports, but none of these airports offer affordable travel options. The majority of airport use is from individuals who privately own planes for personal use.

Iowa Falls Municipal Airport



Photo Source: www.cityofiowafalls.com/airport, 2012

Currently, there are no airports with commercial service located in the Region 6 area. Residents and businesses in Region 6 typically access large, commercial airports in Des Moines, Cedar Rapids, or Waterloo. For most residents in Region 6, an airport with commercial service can be accessed within an hour drive.

PUBLIC TRANSIT

Marshalltown Municipal Transit

Passenger transportation for the general public in the city of Marshalltown is provided by Marshalltown Municipal Transit referred to as MMT. Marshalltown has the only urban transit system operating fixed-route services within Region 6. MMT also provides para-transit service, which is a demand response, door-to-door service for disabled and elderly individuals. These services, though, are largely under contract with Peoplerrides. MMT's fixed-route is accessible to persons with ambulatory disabilities but routes do not always provide convenient access to certain locations.

In 2011, a total of 112,318 rides were provided to Marshalltown residents. Currently, the MMT fleet consists of nine buses. Of the entire fleet, over half the buses have exceeded their useful life. The oldest bus in the fleet is a 1987 model with nearly 700,000 miles logged and certain parts that can no longer be purchased for repair. Vehicle replacement is already a major concern for Marshalltown Municipal Transit, and reductions in funding in the new, MAP-21 legislation will make bus replacement even more challenging in the future. Other challenges for MMT include a limited operating budget that does not support a full-time dispatch position. Additional plans for MMT services that will be required in the future, i.e. safety, security, and emergency preparedness, may also be a challenge to prepare because staff time is already spread thinly.

Peoplerides

Peoplerides is the transit system serving all of Region 6, which is a service of the Region 6 Planning Commission. Everyone qualifies to ride with Peoplerides, but this public transit services does specialize in para-transit service that is door-to-door and demand responsive. In 2012, Peoplerides provided approximately 48,000 rides to residents of Region 6. There are currently 22 vehicles in the fleet, and the system operates on a route and demand-response basis. All of the vehicles fully comply with Americans with Disabilities Act standards with lifts and/or ramps to assist riders with disabilities.

Peoplerides Bus on Dialysis Route



Dialysis Center in Marshalltown in July 2011

Similar to Marshalltown Municipal Transit and all transit systems in Iowa, future bus replacements will be a challenge for Peoplerides. Maintaining current services will also be a challenge because the costs of services are increasing but local government funding and revenues are decreasing for the service. Peoplerides will also need to prepare additional plans that may stretch staff time.

RECREATIONAL TRAILS AND PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

Many additions and improvements have been made to the recreational trail system in Region 6 including both trail and bicycle lane projects. Examples of major recreational trail projects in the region include an extension of the recreational trail in Pine Lake Park in Poweshiek County to the north side of Montezuma, an extension of the trail system in Marshalltown to the Grimes Farm, the addition of bicycle lanes in Marshalltown and Iowa Falls, and the construction of the Rock Run Creek Bridge in Hardin County.

Rock Run Creek Bridge in Hardin County



Photo Source: Hardin County Trail Committee, 2012

It is important to note that Marshall County includes the Heart of Iowa Trail, which is also part of the American Discovery Trail. In Hardin County, the recreational trail system connects areas along the Iowa River to parks and attractions in nearby cities. In addition,

rail banking and recreational trail conversion of the Iowa River Rail is being considered. The conversion of this rail line would add 37 miles of recreational trail to Region 6 and connect Eldora in Hardin County to Marshalltown in Marshall County. Other cities in the region also have comparatively extensive trail systems including Tama, Toledo, and Grinnell.

Overall, achieving connectivity of local trail projects to local, state, and national trail system is critical to the recreation, economy, and transportation goals of Region 6 and Iowa. A recent study completed by the University of Northern Iowa estimates that bicycling generates over \$350 million in direct and indirect economic impacts in Iowa. The study also estimated that bicycling saves Iowa over \$70 million in healthcare costs, which is a substantial and added benefit (Iowa Bicycle Coalition, 2012).

Recently, trail and bicycle lane projects have become less of a priority in the region due to budget constraints and reduced grant funding opportunities. Many officials and residents prefer public funding to be spent on seemingly more practical projects like roads, bridges, sewer, etc. On the other hand, there is still substantial support for maintaining and expanding the recreational trail and bicycle lane system in Region 6. Certain counties and cities have groups of officials and residents who work together to enhance the existing recreational trail system. A few examples include the Iowa Valley Bicycle Coalition and the Hardin County Trails Committee. Regardless of support, in the future, funding trail projects in Region 6 will be a major challenge.

A unique recreational trail issue in Tama County should be mentioned. Tama and Toledo are the only contiguous cities in Region 6, and these cities have not historically coordinated projects. Consequently, connectivity of a recreational trail system is challenging for Tama and Toledo. From north to south, the South

Tama Recreational Trail begins on the west central side of Toledo and terminates on the south side of Tama. The connectivity issue between the two cities is a segment of the trail that runs east then south to access the South Tama School District baseball diamond, but the trail terminates at the northern corporate boundary of Tama. It would be ideal if the trail was extended to reach the school buildings and to loop around to provide trail access to the Tama-Toledo Aquatic Center. Currently, the City of Tama does not have the extra funds to complete a project of this scale.

Pedestrian facilities are also a concern in Region 6—primarily system connectivity and condition. In many cities, there are no sidewalks, gaps in the system, or major cracks that adversely affect pedestrian safety. In all cities, it is anticipated that if property owners were required to make improvements or add sidewalks to their property, there would be major opposition and potentially financial hardship for many property owners.

Both pedestrian and bicycle safety are a concern. There is less tension between pedestrians and motorists compared to bicyclists and motorists. Sharing the roadway can be frustrating for motorists due to perceived unpredictability of bicyclists—not following traffic laws is often cited—while bicyclists can be frustrated with unaware motorists or aggressive behavior. On the other hand, there are some areas without sidewalks where pedestrians walk on the street frequently, which is a definite safety concern, especially during inclement weather.

IMPORTANT TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM CONSIDERATIONS

- ✓ The long-range transportation plan for Region 6 will be updated after this Strategy is developed so more up-to-date transportation data will be available in September 2013.

- ✓ A highway system connects Region 6 counties and Region 6 to the state of Iowa and beyond. U.S. Highways 65 and 63, and State Highways 14, 21, and 146 run north-south; U.S. Highway 20, State Highways 175, 6, and 30, and Interstate 80 all serve the Region from east to west.
- ✓ The current challenge and priority for both counties and cities in the region is maintaining the current roadway and bridge system to ensure safe and efficient travel. The challenge in maintaining the existing road system is sufficient funding. Projects are being prioritized so highly traveled routes or potential bottlenecks in the system have funding priority.
- ✓ Bridges are a major concern due to the high cost of replacement.
- ✓ Since Region 6 is primarily rural, maintenance issues include single-axle wagons, usually an agricultural implement, which places an extremely heavy point load on roads and bridges. Bridges are especially a challenge due to posted load limits increasingly being ignored by implement operators. Extra heavy semi-truck loads are also a maintenance issue in certain areas in the region.
- ✓ Natural hazards and their effect on travel in is another major issue in the region. Generally, any water crossing in the road system has the potential for flooding.
- ✓ Freight rail, in partnership with the trucking industry, provides intermodal transportation that is critical to the economic health of Iowa. Aside from rail lines, semi-trucks are also a major freight carrier in Region 6 and Iowa.
- ✓ At-grade rail line crossings are a concern in most Region 6 counties and cities that are served by a freight rail line. Several cities, though, have rail lines and crossings close to developed areas. Safety, primarily derailment and hazardous materials, and noise are the primary concerns.
- ✓ Currently, there are no airports with commercial service located in the Region 6 area. Residents and businesses in Region 6 typically access large, commercial airports in Des Moines, Cedar Rapids, or Waterloo. For most residents in Region 6, an airport with commercial service can be accessed within an hour drive.
- ✓ Similar to Marshalltown Municipal Transit and all transit systems in Iowa, future bus replacements will be a challenge for Peoplerrides. The primary challenge is the reduction in bus replacement funds due to the new transportation bill, MAP-21.
- ✓ Overall, achieving connectivity of local trail projects to local, state, and national trail system is critical to the recreation, economy, and transportation goals of Region 6 and Iowa.
- ✓ Pedestrian facilities are also a concern in Region 6—primarily system connectivity and condition. In many cities, there are no sidewalks, gaps in the system, or major cracks that adversely affect pedestrian safety.
- ✓ Both pedestrian and bicycle safety are a concern. There is less tension between pedestrians and motorists compared to bicyclists and motorists.

GEOGRAPHY, LAND USE, AND ENVIRONMENT

The geography of Region 6 is typified by rolling hills and plains, including some of the state's most productive farmland. The land use of the region is predominately agriculture or agriculture-related. Urban land accounts for only a small percentage of the land within the region.

Region 6 contains numerous lakes, streams, and creeks that provide water for food production, human consumption, and recreation. One of the most prominent is the Iowa River, which has been a significant cultural and economic resource. The Iowa River runs through, or near to, the communities of Alden, Iowa Falls, Steamboat Rock, Eldora, and Union in Hardin County; Liscomb, Albion, Marshalltown, and LeGrand in Marshall County; and Montour, Tama/Toledo, and Chelsea in Tama County.

Except for where the river was straightened for agriculture in northern Marshall County, the Iowa River forms sweeping meander loops as it flows across its floodplains. These floodplains are underlain by porous alluvial deposits that yield valuable groundwater supplies for the area. In Region 6, the Iowa River and its associated creeks are prone to major flooding. The most recent and major flood events were in 1993 and 2008.

Numerous prehistoric Native American habitation and ceremonial sites have been found along or near the Iowa River to suggest that this part of the region has been an important economic resource since the last glacier retreated from the area. The Iowa River Greenbelt includes thick woodlands, steep valleys, and geological rock formations.

While the region's lakes and streams are assets for the cultural, economic, and agricultural pursuits of the region, these waterways are vulnerable to contamination from human habitation on the land's surface – both from agricultural and from urban land uses. Land and water conservation must be a factor in any new transportation policies. It is also critical that developers of any new economic initiatives be mindful of their impact on the region's watershed.

HARDIN COUNTY

Hardin County has an area of 367,168 acres, or about 576 square miles. Most of the soils in the county are nearly level to gently sloping or moderately sloping. Those moderately sloping soils are mostly in the southeastern portion of the county.

Natural drainage of 90 percent of the county is provided by the Iowa River and its immediate tributaries, according to the 1981 Hardin County Soil Survey. Ten square miles in the southwest corner of the county is drained by a tributary of the Skunk River, and 30 square miles in northeast Hardin County are drained by Cedar River tributaries. Approximately 32 percent of the soils in the county are poorly to very poorly drained, but they are suitable enough for crop production. In other areas with insufficient underground and surface drainage, crops may be ruined by the pooling of the still water.

About 260,000 acres, which is about 71 percent of Hardin County land is prime farmland, perfect for crops, mainly corn and soybeans. Some of this land, which would be ideal for agriculture, has been converted into industrial and urban uses.

Aside from agriculture and urban uses, Hardin County's geography supports natural recreation opportunities. The Hardin County Greenbelt, which runs along the Iowa River, is a 42-mile stretch of river valley that runs through Hardin County from Alden through Iowa Falls, Steamboat Rock, Eldora, and Union. This area offers an unusual concentration of recreational opportunities, diverse wildlife habitats, and spectacular views. Most of the greenbelt is accessible from the Iowa River Greenbelt Scenic Drive that extends from Alden to Eldora. The area is also accessible by hiking, biking, and canoeing.

Natural Area in Hardin County



Summer 2011

Other natural resources in Hardin County include forest cover— Fallen Rock, Hardin City Woodland Forest, and Mann Wilderness Area—which are preserved by the state. There is also a state park in Hardin County, Pine Lake State Park, which is located near Eldora.

MARSHALL COUNTY

Marshall County has an area of nearly 366,733 acres, or about 573 square miles. Most of the soils in the county are nearly level to gently sloping or moderately sloping. Marshall County is one of the moderately hilly, central counties in Iowa.

There are two major drainage systems for Marshall County, consisting of the Iowa-Cedar River and the Skunk River, according to the 1981 Marshall County Soil Survey. Nearly 80 percent of the county is drained by the Iowa River and its tributaries. A small area in northeastern Marshall County is drained by the Wolf Creek and the remaining area in the southwestern portion of the County is drained by the Skunk River. Though 12 percent of the soils in the county are poorly to very poorly drained, they are drained enough for crop production. In other areas with insufficient underground and surface drainage, crops may be ruined by the pooling of the still water.

Marshall has seven soil associations. The soil that is predominate— 30 percent of the county—is, “moderately sloping, to steep, well drained and moderately well drained, silty and loamy soils formed in loess and glacial till; on uplands.” The main enterprises from this soil association are cash grain crops and feeding swine and beef cattle. The suitability for this association is cultivated crops, hay, and pasture. Much of the land is suited for row crops like corn and beans since this association has a good drainage pattern. About 182,000 acres or 50 percent of Marshall County land is prime farmland, perfect for crops, mainly corn and soybeans. Some land that is ideal for agriculture has been converted into industrial and urban uses.

POWESHIEK COUNTY

Poweshiek County has an area of 376,960 acres, or about 583 square miles. Most of the soils in the county are nearly level to gently sloping or moderately sloping. Poweshiek County is relatively diverse in elevation compared to flat north central counties.

Natural drainage of the county is provided by the North Skunk River and its immediate tributaries. The English River, a tributary for the Iowa River, originates in the west-central portion of the county, crosses the middle and runs in a southeasterly direction through the southeast corner of the county while another branch of the same river originates in the very south central part of the county. A segment of the North Skunk River, one of the main rivers in Iowa crosses through the southwest corner of the county.

Poweshiek has eight soil associations, seven of which are on uplands and one on bottom land. The dominate soil—35 percent of the county—is “gently and moderately sloping, well drained and moderately well drained soils that formed in loess, on uplands.” Common farming products are livestock and grain. Much of the land is used for row crops like corn and beans.

View from Overlook at Diamond Lake



Summer 2011

There is one state preserve located in Poweshiek County. The Fleming Woods area is a forest cover and biological area.

Poweshiek County has two fairly large residential lake developments. One development is focused around Holiday Lake, which is located in the northeast part of the county. The other development is focused around Lake Ponderosa near Montezuma, which is in the south central part of the county. Diamond Lake is also located near Montezuma but this lake is part of a large county park managed by Poweshiek County Conservation.

TAMA COUNTY

Tama County has an area of 462,300 acres, or about 720 square miles. The Iowa River, one of the main rivers in the state, crosses the southern part of the county and runs in a southeasterly direction to its southeast corner. It is of medium gradient and is subject to flooding of low velocity and short duration in the spring and after periods of heavy rainfall. Damage by flooding is chiefly to the agricultural land in the county. In some areas, loess hills rise quite abruptly to a height of 150 to 200 feet above the river.

Most of Tama County is located on dissected uplands. About three-fourths of the county is drained by the Iowa River and its principal tributaries-Deer Creek, Richland Creek, and Salt Creek. Wolf Creek, in the northern part of the county, drains the rest of the county. It runs from Gladbrook to about 3 miles south of the northeast corner of the county. The entire drainage system empties into the Mississippi River.

Generally, the topography is nearly level to rolling to very steep in the southern half, along the Iowa River and its tributaries. Some small areas between the rivers and creeks on the major divides are level or nearly level.

Pahas, or prominent elongated ridges or elliptical mounds that are 50 to 75 feet above the nearly level plain, are in the northern part of the county. They are oriented in a northwest-southeast direction.

Tama County is not entirely as flat as some parts of Iowa, but it does not have near as much variation in elevation as other counties in Iowa. Most of the soils in Tama County formed in material that transported from other locations and deposited through the action of glacial ice, water, wind, or gravity. The main kinds of parent material in the county are loess, alluvium, glacial drift, and sand eolian material.

Loess, a silt material deposited by wind, covers about 83 percent of the county. It ranges in depth from about 15 to 20 feet on the more stable ridge tops south of the Iowa River to about 4 to 8 feet on the ridge tops of the Iowa erosion surface in the northern half of the county. In most areas it overlies glacial till.

About 17 percent of the soils in the county formed in alluvium. The major areas of these soils are along the Iowa River and Wolf Creek and their tributaries. The flood plains along the Iowa River and some of the alluvial terraces are large. The flood plain along the Iowa River from the City of Tama to the eastern edge of the county is 0.5 mile to 1.5 miles wide. The stream terrace near the junction of Otter Creek and the Iowa River is about 960 acres in size. The stream terrace near the junction of Salt Creek and the Iowa River is about 1,200 acres in size.

Other natural resources in Tama County include Mericle Woods, which is forest cover that is also maintained as a biological area. This area is preserved by the State. Casey's Paha, referring to the pahas mentioned, is a geologic area in the county that is also preserved by the state.

There are also several wildlife management areas in Tama County. The Otter Creek Marsh near Chelsea is a management area but also a refuge in certain areas so no trespassing is allowed during certain times of the year. Salt Creek and West Salt Creek near Vining and Union Grove near Gladbrook are the other wildlife management areas in the county. Union Grove is actually one of two state parks in the region.

Like Poweshiek County, Tama County also has a residential lake development. The area around Union Grove Lake is where the majority of new residential development is occurring in Tama County. The development ranges from traditional homes to cabins to manufactured units. This development has approximately 200 homes.

IMPORTANT GEOGRAPHY, LAND USE, AND ENVIRONMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- ✓ The geography of Region 6 is typified by rolling hills and plains, including some of the state's most productive farmland.
- ✓ Some land in the region that is ideal for agriculture has been converted into industrial and urban uses.
- ✓ The region's lakes and streams are assets for the cultural, economic, and agricultural pursuits of the region, these waterways are vulnerable to contamination from human habitation on the land's surface – both from agricultural and from urban land uses.
- ✓ The Iowa River and its associated creeks are prone to major flooding. The most recent and major flood events were in 1993 and 2008.

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

Region 6's local education institutions include nearly 20 school districts, the Iowa Valley Community College District, and Grinnell College. Iowa's major universities are also located within a one to two hour drive for Region 6 residents. These institutions are important to the Region 6 economy because they provide the education and training to fill skilled and professional positions.

PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

Hardin County

The AGWSR Community School District is located in Ackley, Iowa, a town in the very northeast corner of Hardin County, and Wellsburg, Iowa, located in west central Grundy County. There are 16 miles between the 2 towns. AGWSR serves the communities of Ackley, Geneva, Steamboat Rock, and Wellsburg which are scattered in the four counties of Butler, Franklin, Grundy, and Hardin. These communities are each located within 17 miles of the high school middle school, in Ackley. This district contains the AGWSR Elementary, Middle and High Schools with enrollments of 142, 201, and 206, respectively for the 2010-2011 school year.

The Alden Community School District is located in Alden, Iowa. This school district only has one school, the Alden Elementary School. All children feed into the Iowa Falls School District after elementary school. Though the district shares a superintendent with Iowa Falls CSD, they are two separate districts with two separate boards of education. With a 259 student enrollment for the 2009-2010 school year, the Alden Community School District is the smallest in Hardin County.

The BCLUW Community School District serves the communities of Beaman, Conrad, Liscomb, Union, and Whitten. This district is unique in that its jurisdiction stretches across a county boundary line. This district's offices are located in Conrad which is in the south west portion of Grundy County. The school buildings are split between the two cities of Union (located in the south east portion of Hardin County) and Conrad which are about ten miles apart. Enrollment for this school district is split between the high school, middle school, and elementary school with 225, 184, and 217, respectively for the 2010-2011 school year. This is a total of 626, for the district.

The Eldora-New Providence Community School District is located in Eldora, Iowa the county seat of Hardin County. Eldora is located in the east central portion of the county. This district contains the South Hardin High School and Eldora-New Providence Elementary School with 293 and 297 students, a total of 580, enrolled for the 2010-2011 school year.

The Hubbard-Radcliffe Community School District is located in Radcliffe, Iowa but also serves the City of Hubbard. Both communities are located in the west central portion of the county. This district contains the South Hardin Middle School with a 201 student enrollment, and Hubbard-Radcliffe Elementary School with a 170 student enrollment for the 2009-2010 school year. These schools feed into the South Hardin High School in Eldora.

The Iowa Falls Alden Community School District is located in Iowa Falls, Iowa. Iowa Falls is located in the north central portion of the county. This district contains the Pineview Elementary with 267, Rock Run Elementary with 255, Riverbend Middle with 185, and Iowa Falls-Alden High School with a 412 student enrollment for the 2010-2011 school year. With a total of 1,119 students enrolled, the Iowa Falls Alden Community School District is the largest school district in Hardin County.

Marshall County

The East Marshall Community School District offices are located in Gilman, Iowa, a town in the very southeast corner of Marshall County. The schools are split amongst the cities of Laurel (Elementary), Gilman (Middle), and Le Grand (High). There are about 10 miles between Le Grand in the east central portion of the county and Laurel and Gilman, located in the southeast corner of the county. This district contains the East Marshall Elementary, Middle and High Schools with enrollments of 310, 273, and 298, respectively for the 2010-2011 school year.

The Marshalltown Community School District is the largest school district in the County and solely serves the City of Marshalltown, county seat of Marshall County. Enrollment for this school district is split between the high school, middle school, and 7 elementary schools with 1,561, 721, and 2,703, respectively for the 2010-2011 school year. This is a total of 4,985, for the district.

Poweshiek County

The Brooklyn-Guernsey-Malcom Community School District is located in Brooklyn, Iowa. Brooklyn is in the west central portion of Poweshiek County. This school district also serves the cities of Guernsey (to the south) and Malcom (to the west); each located less than 12 miles away. This district contains the Brooklyn-Guernsey-Malcom Elementary School and Brooklyn-Guernsey-Malcom Jr-Sr High School with enrollments of 301 and 282, respectively for the 2009-2010 school year.

The Grinnell-Newburg Community School District is located in Grinnell, Iowa. This school district also serves the city of Newburg (to the north), located less than 10 miles away. This district contains the Bailey Park Elementary School with a 189 student enrollment, Davis Elementary School with a 268 student enrollment, Fairview Elementary School with a 234 student enrollment, the Grinnell Community Middle School with a 507 student enrollment, and the Grinnell Community High School with a 558 student enrollment for the 2009-2010 school year. With a total enrollment of 1,756 students, the Grinnell-Newburg community school district is the largest in Poweshiek County.

The Montezuma Community School District is located in Montezuma, Iowa the county seat of Poweshiek County. Montezuma is located in the south central portion of the county. This district contains the Montezuma Elementary School with a 304 student enrollment, Montezuma Junior High School with a 74 student enrollment, and Montezuma High School with a 143 student enrollment for the 2009-2010 school year. With a total of 521 students enrolled, the Montezuma community school district is the smallest school district in Poweshiek County.

Tama County

The North Tama County Community School District is located in Traer, Iowa which is in the northeastern portion of the county. This district contains the Traer Elementary School and North Tama High School with enrollments of 269 and 265, respectively for the 2009-2010 school year. Because the elementary school serves kindergarten through 6th grade and the high school serves grades 7-12, there is no need for a separate junior high building. Students are considered to be in junior high in the 7th and 8th grades.

Tama County is also home to the South Tama County Community School District, located in the cities of Tama and Toledo. Situated in the south central portion of the county, the district contains the South Tama County Elementary (Tama), Middle (Toledo) and High (Toledo) Schools with student enrollments of 740, 317, and 451, respectively. With 1,508 students enrolled, the South Tama County community school district is the largest of the five in Tama County.

The Gladbrook-Reinbeck Community School District is unique in that its jurisdiction stretches across a county boundary line. This district's offices are located in Reinbeck which is in the south eastern portion of Grundy County. The school buildings are split between the two cities of Gladbrook (located in the north western portion of Tama County) and Reinbeck which are about 18 brook miles apart. This district contains the Gladbrook Elementary School with a 35 student enrollment, and Reinbeck Elementary School with a 165 student enrollment, located in their respective cities. The Gladbrook-Reinbeck Middle School, in Gladbrook has a 176 student enrollment while the Gladbrook-Reinbeck High School is in Reinbeck with a 233 student enrollment for the 2009-2010 school year.

The Union Community District is like the Gladbrook-Reinbeck community school district in that its jurisdiction stretches across a county boundary line. This district's offices are located in La Porte City which is in the southeastern portion of Black Hawk County. The school buildings are split between the two cities of Dysart (located in the north eastern portion of Tama County) and La Porte City which are about 15 miles apart. This district contains the Dysart-Geneseo Elementary School with a 218 student enrollment, and La Porte City Elementary School with a 323 student enrollment, located in their respective cities. The Union Middle School, in Dysart has a 291 student enrollment while the Union High School is in La Porte City with a 416 student enrollment for the 2009-2010 school year.

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

The Iowa Valley Community College District provides post-secondary and continuing education opportunities in Region 6. The District operates the Marshalltown Community College, Ellsworth Community College in Iowa Falls, Iowa Valley Grinnell, and Iowa Valley Continuing Education. Degree programs through the community college include agriculture and animal science; arts, communications, and social sciences; health services; and sciences. Continuing education classes include a large variety of subjects ranging from college preparation to business to home and garden.

Specific classes offered by the District that are extremely important to Region 6 include English as a Second Language (ESL) classes for persons from any country or culture, GED (high school equivalency), classes in English and Spanish, citizenship classes in English and Spanish, and computer classes in English and Spanish. With increased diversity in the region, classes taught in the Spanish language or classes that teach English will continue to be an important opportunity offered by local educational institutions.

Grinnell College is a private education institution that is located in Poweshiek County along Interstate 80. The college offers several degree programs in the followings areas: humanities, science, and social studies. The college also has several distinguished programs. Approximately 1,600 students attend and the graduation rate is 88 percent.

The University of Iowa is located in Iowa City, which is located one to two hours from the region. Residents who live in Poweshiek County have the shortest travel time to reach the university. Iowa State University is located in Ames, which is just 15 minutes from Marshall County. In Hardin County, residents are about an hour from the University of Northern Iowa in Cedar Falls.

Additionally, Region 6 has a wealth of organizations and programs available to address a full spectrum of educational needs for both individuals and industry. Early childhood through post-secondary education services are provided through Area Education Agency 267, the central offices of which are located in Marshalltown. Services to individuals include school- and welfare-to-work programs and vocational or rehabilitation training. Businesses and industry in all Region communities can receive assistance and support with workforce development programs.

IMPORTANT EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS

- ✓ Region 6's local education institutions include primary to secondary education school districts, the Iowa Valley Community College District, and Grinnell College.
- ✓ The Iowa Valley Community College District maintains a wide range of degree programs and continuing education classes.
- ✓ Grinnell College maintains a wide range of degree programs and distinguished education centers.
- ✓ Iowa's major universities are also located within a one to two hour drive for Region 6 residents. These institutions are important to the Region 6 economy because they provide the education and training needed to fill skilled and professional positions.

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND THREATS

Moving beyond trends in data, other important considerations or strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats—SWOT—for the region were identified at the first Regional Development Committee by Committee members and the Region 6 Planning Commission. The traditional SWOT analysis was used to identify both positive and negative aspects of the region. See Figure 12 for the graphic used to complete the analysis.

To develop a full SWOT analysis for the region, data trends were reviewed and analyses for each county in the region were completed by Committee members representing a particular county and presented to the entire Committee. Based on the SWOT analysis results for each county, a region wide SWOT analysis was completed by all Regional Development Committee members.

The identification of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and strengths is an extremely important component of Strategy development because it serves as the primary basis for developing goals and objectives—after analyzing current and past trends using available data. Having completed the SWOT analysis with the Regional Development Committee, the final analysis encompasses committee members' knowledge and expertise, which can provide a different and valuable perspective that may not result with only data analysis.

The SWOT analysis developed for each county and the entire region can be found in the proceeding pages. Please note that these analyses are useful not just for this strategy but also as a reference tool for the counties and cities in the region to make decisions.

Figure 12: SWOT Analysis Graphic

SWOT ANALYSIS

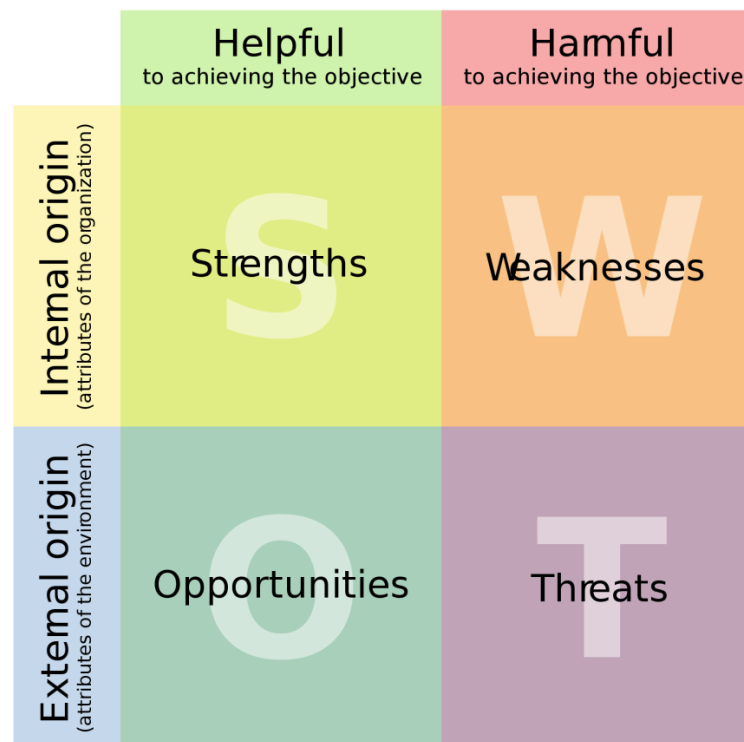


Figure Source: Wikipedia, 2012

The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that were identified for Region 6 are below in Table 34. Detailed discussion of these positive and negatives aspects of the region are included in the following pages.

Table 34: Region 6 SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Urban-rural diversity ○ Major travel routes ○ Post-secondary education opportunities ○ Industrial growth ○ Strong leadership ○ Sense of community and identity ○ “Can do!” attitude ○ Public-private partnerships ○ Public transit ○ Workforce that is ready to work ○ Freight infrastructure ○ Service learning programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lack of specific skilled labor ○ Issues with willingness to work ○ Lack of youth employment opportunities ○ Lack of soft skills ○ Lack of retail options ○ Broadband issues ○ Aging water and transportation infrastructure ○ Lack of affordable quality housing ○ Shortage of healthcare providers ○ Issues with elected officials not understanding all municipal functions
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Industrial growth ○ Matching job training with job availability ○ Energy production ○ Recreation facilities ○ Childcare ○ Affordable quality housing ○ Local food system development ○ Healthy lifestyle promotion ○ Overcoming cost of rail infrastructure projects ○ Freight ○ Senior service provision ○ Recycling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Brain Drain ○ Air and water quality issues ○ Natural disasters ○ Reduction of federal and state funds ○ Water availability for industrial use ○ Healthcare reimbursement ○ Increased poverty, e.g. increase in free or reduced cost lunch in schools

STRENGTHS

Region 6 has several strengths that help to maintain a strong economy. Although the region was adversely affected in the recent economic downturn, unemployment rates did not reach as high a level as the rest of the nation. In addition, investments, public and private, continue in the urban and rural areas of the region.

The first of many different assets or strengths of the region is the urban and rural diversity that characterizes the people, economy, and landscape of the region. Region 6 is primarily rural, but there are several urban centers with basic services and amenities that are not available in the region's small cities, e.g. fuel and convenience stores, grocery stores, entertainment, schools, etc. On the other hand, the rural areas of the region contribute to Iowa's major economic sector, agriculture, and provide natural resources and amenities, e.g. camping, fishing, hunting, hiking, etc.

In the region's cities, there has been substantial industrial growth and there are plans for expansion in the future. Major examples include the expansion of Brownells in Grinnell, expansion of JBS Swift & Co. in Marshalltown, wind farm development, and the planned reopening of the meat processing facility in Tama. A supplementary strength is a ready workforce. An unemployed workforce is typically a weakness, but in Region 6, the fairly high unemployment rate is viewed positively because there are workers in the area to attract new employers or encourage the expansion of existing businesses. Many businesses struggle because there is no ready supply of workers in decent proximity.

The transportation system in Region 6 is also a major strength. There are major travel routes in the region including highways, Interstate, and a comprehensive secondary road system to move

people and goods safely and efficiently. Freight transportation infrastructure for both semi-trucks and rail is especially helpful to attract and retain businesses in the region. There is also access to public transit in any area of the region for those who are not able to drive or cannot afford a private vehicle.

There are many opportunities for continued education in the region including service learning programs and post-secondary education through the local community college system. Iowa's major public universities are also within a one to two hour drive from all areas of the region. For those who cannot travel or attend programs for time reasons, more online education options are being offered, too. In the future, additional job training or learning new skills will become increasingly more important in the changing economy, and the Region 6 workforce has access.

Other strengths in the region focus on residents', leaders', and businesses' attitude, strength, and willingness to collaborate. Large and small projects can be achieved if the public and private sectors are willing to work together. In addition, residents in the region are willing to work together to complete projects that would otherwise not be successful without major professional or financial assistance.

Overall, Region 6 has a base of strengths that ensures economic goals for the region can be achieved. Both data analysis and formal SWOT analysis completed by a region wide committee indicate a strong foundation for success in developing a strong and diverse economy. The key is using the positive aspects of the region to overcome the negative aspects.

WEAKNESSES

Despite many diverse assets, Region 6 has several weaknesses that will continue to be a challenge in achieving economic goals for the region. Many weaknesses have the potential to counter existing strengths so issues should be addressed continuously. Aside from what data indicates, the Regional Development Committee identified several weaknesses in Region 6.

Several weaknesses in the region focused on characteristics of the existing workforce. One major issue was a lack of specific skilled labor because many companies in the region cannot find workers with the appropriate skills set to perform certain jobs. A challenge in finding workers with skills for advanced manufacturing positions is an example. Other workforce characteristic issues include a lack of soft skills and willingness to work. Soft skills refer to basic skills that demonstrate dependability like arriving to work on time, not leaving before the end of a shift, or calling an employer when sickness or weather prevents work attendance.

Another workforce issue that concerns the Regional Development Committee is a lack of employment opportunities for youth in the region. Discussion focused on a lack of non-skilled jobs for youth in the local economy due to a loss of skilled jobs, typically performed by adults, in the past decade. Other discussion regarding youth employment opportunities included a lack of opportunities to intern or job shadow at local businesses and issues with stigma attached to attending technical programs rather than a university after completing high school.

Although infrastructure is a major strength in Region 6, the age and constant deterioration of water and transportation infrastructure is a definite weakness in the region. Improving water and transportation infrastructure is an ongoing process, and the current

maintenance and improvement needs far outpace public budgets. Water treatment facilities and bridges are especially a concern due to the high cost of improvements or replacement, and these facilities are extremely important to the Region 6's economy. With an agriculture and manufacturing economic base, water treatment capacity and overall quality is extremely important. In addition, bridge closures are not only inconvenient but also costly to industries that must reroute travel.

The affordability and quality of housing in Region 6 is another weakness to consider in this economic development strategy. Regional Development Committee members, economic development professionals, and staff in most Region 6 cities consistently cite housing as an issue. There are issues with property managers maintaining quality rental housing, and there is a lack of moderately priced, good quality housing for young professionals and families. Some city officials in the region believe that housing is one of their greatest challenges in attracting and retaining residents.

Another major weakness is a lack of retail options in the region. There is a major leakage of retail sales in all Region 6 counties, and the loss of sales is increasing each year. Most cities in the region have basic services available but some cities do not even have a convenience store to purchase fuel or basic groceries. The cities with large retailers and/or specialty retail stores do provide more than basic services, but there is still very little variety. Region 6 residents are within an hour drive of at least one major urban center with much more retail store diversity so retail sales leakage is not surprising.

As for other basic needs, a lack of healthcare providers is cited as a weakness in the region. Region 6 residents who live in the especially small communities must travel to receive basic healthcare. For

elderly who can no longer drive, traveling to regular appointments is difficult. Public transit is available to negate travel issues, but the cost of service may not be feasible for low-income residents. In general, there is a challenge in attracting healthcare providers to work in the clinics located in rural areas. The Region 6 population is aging so healthcare will become a major issue in the future.

A final weakness that was identified by the Regional Development Committee is an issue with newly elected officials not completely understanding municipal functions. Certain cities in the region struggle with a high turnover rate of elected officials, and local staff does not have the time or expertise to effectively work with new officials. There is concern that less may be accomplished due to public officials' uncertainty.

OPPORTUNITIES

After strengths and weaknesses were identified, several opportunities for improving the region's economy were discussed by the Regional Development Committee. Most opportunities build on the existing strengths in the region but some are solutions to weaknesses. Other opportunities were added with the purpose of enhancing quality of life in the region.

Freight and freight infrastructure improvements are a major opportunity for growth, especially if planned expansions can be completed. With freight infrastructure, though, costs for improvements and expansions is extremely high so public-private partnerships would be ideal. Overall, freight is extremely important in strengthening the economy of the region so projects to improve efficiency are strongly encouraged.

The main economic opportunities for Region 6 include continued industrial growth with energy production specifically discussed.

With well-established ethanol refineries, wind farms, and the prospect of a new natural gas power generation facility, energy production is becoming an economic activity in the region. Manufacturing and food production and processing will continue to be important economic activities in the region.

A major opportunity is to match job training opportunities with job availability in the region. The local community college system is well positioned to fill education gaps for major companies in Region 6. Secondary educational institutions could also be a partner in providing needed education through specialized courses.

A growing sector in the Region 6 economy is a local food production system in which vegetables, fruit, meats, dairy, and other food products are produced and processed for local consumption. There is increased interest from consumers and producers who either want to expand or diversify their operations. There is also interest in learning production and processing methods.

As for quality of life, addressing the lack of affordable quality housing in the region is a major opportunity in Region 6. The number of professionals and families that chose to live outside the region due to poor housing options or chose not to work in the region due to poor housing options may be reduced. In general, more options should be available to the residents of the region.

Other quality of life opportunities include providing childcare options, promoting healthy lifestyles, and providing more recreation facilities. Several cities in the region have extensive indoor and outdoor recreation facilities while several cities do not have any facilities for residents. To use a fitness facility or outdoor recreational trail, some residents of Region 6 must drive to another city.

An additional quality of life opportunity is enhancing services for seniors or elderly in the region. The Region 6 population is aging, and more specialized services may be needed. Services may include healthcare, recreation, and transportation services beyond current offerings. Region 6 could be a region that supports all ages so the appropriate services and amenities should be available for all generations.

Finally, another opportunity in the region focuses on sustainability. Most cities and the four counties provide recycling services for solid waste, but major improvements could be made in households and businesses. New or enhanced recycling programs are major opportunities for enhancing the sustainability of operations and possibly reducing solid waste service costs in the region.

Despite weaknesses in the region, there are several opportunities for building on strengths and enhancing quality of life in Region 6. It is extremely important that these opportunities are pursued through the goals, objectives, and projects in this strategy. A straightforward and fairly uncomplicated approach to strengthening and diversifying the Region 6 economy is to focus on the major economic opportunities in this analysis.

THREATS

Threats, which are typically external to the region, are numerous as identified by the Regional Development Committee. A common threat throughout Iowa is the loss of youth after high school graduation. Most often in rural communities, youth receive their secondary education and leave the area to attend a university or work in a comparatively urban area. After living outside of rural areas for an extended period of time, young professionals do not move back to their hometown, which contributes to continuous population decline.

A major threat is reductions in federal and state funds for public sector projects. Water and transportation infrastructure continue to deteriorate and improvement or replacement costs continue to increase. More counties and cities in the region are using financing options such as bonds to finance large projects that can no longer be deferred to the future. In the future, limited bonding capacity may become a major issue if funding assistance continues to decline.

Water and air quality issues are also a major threat in Region 6. High yield agriculture operations and intense industrial processes threaten both water and air quality in the region and Iowa. Water availability for industrial use may also become a concern if industrial growth continues in the region. Some cities do not have the water treatment capacity needed for large industries to locate within their service boundary. Onsite, pretreatment facilities may be required and this can be a deterrent to new companies or expansion.

As demonstrated in several major floods and severe winter storms, Region 6 is vulnerable to natural hazards. The transportation system, municipal operations, and basic services can be disrupted for an extended period of time or major damage could be sustained. Without mitigation, natural hazards can severely affect the economy.

Finally, quality of life threats include increased poverty throughout region and reduced assistance from the federal and state government. In many schools, there has been a major increase in free or reduced cost lunch and other data indicates a general increase in social assistance. Overall, increased levels of poverty may indicate a lack of well-paid jobs, lack of job skills in the workforce, and an increased need for social assistance and services in the region. Regardless, goals in this strategy should focus to reduce poverty in the region.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INVESTMENTS IN REGION 6*

Hardin County	Marshall County	Poweshiek County	Tama County
Highway 20 & 65 Travel Plaza Utilities Extension	Public sewer improvements in unincorporated Marshall County (Green Mountain & Timber Creek Trailer Park)	Montezuma downtown improvements	Toledo water treatment facility improvements
Canadian National Railroad & Union Pacific Railroad Intermodal Terminal Rail Study	Le Grand sewer improvements	Grinnell wastewater treatment improvements	Tama wastewater collection improvements
Ackley Wastewater & Storm Sewer Improvements	Rural water extension to Ferguson	Montezuma wastewater collection and storm sewer improvements	Vining sewer improvements
Whitten sewer improvements	Marshalltown sewer improvements	Diamond Lake Park Improvements	Meskwaki Cultural Museum
Eldora Industrial Park expansion	Marshalltown storm sewer improvements	US Highway 63 national highway designation & environmental study	Meskwaki Travel Plaza
Eldora storm sewer improvements	Ferguson sewer improvements	Grinnell recreational trail improvements	Otter Creek Park improvements
Iowa Falls Washington Avenue bridge improvements	Albion water improvements	Hartwick water improvements	US Highway 63 National Highway Designation & Environmental Study
Iowa River Railroad rail to trail to conversion	Rhodes sewer improvements	Grinnell Industrial Park expansion	Wind turbine generating areas
Iowa Falls streetscape in downtown	Iowa River Railroad rail to trail to conversion	Montezuma single family housing addition expansion	Traer ownership of Traer Manufacturing Facility
Rural water extension to Buckeye	Alliant Energy natural gas generating facility	Brownells expansion in Grinnell	Iowa Quality Beef planning to reopen in Tama
Ellsworth Municipal Hospital construction in Iowa Falls	Wind turbine power generating areas	* Blue highlight indicates future investment in the region.	
Wind turbine power generating areas	Green Castle Lake Marshall County Conservation Board improvements		
Wastewater improvements at Hardin County Conservation Board campground by Steamboat Rock	Marshalltown Medical and Surgical Center renovation		
Cargill facility expansion in Iowa Falls	JBS Swift & Co. Expansion		

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND VITAL PROJECTS

Based on state and national priorities, a full background of existing conditions, trends, a formal analysis of Region 6’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and strengths, and economic investments, five primary economic development goals were identified for Region 6 by the Regional Development Committee. Overall, these goals are meant to achieve the ultimate vision of creating a strong and diverse economy in Region 6.

GOAL ONE

Retain and increase quality jobs in the region by strengthening existing industries; promoting targeted industries; and strengthening and supporting small businesses, locally-owned businesses, and creative entrepreneurs in the region. Targeted industries identified by the Iowa Economic Development Authority include advanced manufacturing, renewable energy, biosciences, information technology, financial services, and food manufacturing.

Objectives include:

- 1.1 Encourage educational institutions to match education and training opportunities with employment needs in the region.
- 1.2 Provide information about the assistance—financial, professional development, planning, etc.—available to small, start-up, or expanding businesses.
- 1.3 Encourage and support professional development and technical skills training programs for youth.
- 1.4 Provide a well-connected, quality transportation system to ensure the safe and efficient movement of people and goods in the region.

- 1.5 Provide a quality infrastructure system to ensure businesses and homes have access to water, energy, and information technology that is reliable and safe.
- 1.6 Increase access to jobs through transportation alternatives.
- 1.7 Increase community patronage of local businesses.

Vital projects include:

- Pursue transportation system improvement funds
- Improve marketing and promotion of the available revolving loan funds in the region by developing a clearinghouse for all revolving loan fund information, assess current marketing techniques, and identify improvements.
- Compile information about the tax tools and incentives available to cities, counties, and businesses in the region.
- Compile and distribute information about funding opportunities for cities, counties, and organizations in the region.
- Assess high-speed telecommunication needs in the region.

Suggested projects include:

- Assist with Customer Workforce Plan recommendations being developed by the Iowa Workforce Development Region 6 office.
- Inventory vocational training and employment opportunity programs in the region and work with businesses to determine what additional programs may be needed.
- Identify and work with employers that could benefit from an employee carpool or rideshare-type program.

GOAL TWO

Promote and support healthy lifestyles in the region.

Objectives include:

- 2.1 Improve regional awareness and need for sustainability and healthy active lifestyles.
- 2.2 Increase access to affordable and healthy food.
- 2.3 Increase access and support for recreational facilities, indoor or outdoor.
- 2.4 Provide safe and accessible pedestrian and bicycle facilities.
- 2.5 Increase access and support for public transit service.
- 2.6 Provide the basic needs of all generations—young and elderly.

Vital projects include:

- Increase marketing of public transit options in the region.
- Create a team for improving healthy lifestyles on a county wide basis.
- Identify the need for indoor recreation facilities and related funding opportunities for the region.

Suggested projects include:

- Complete assessment of access to affordable and healthy food in interested communities.
- Complete walking and bicycling assessments in interested communities.
- Complete a focus group of young professionals in the region to identify their quality of life needs and concerns.

GOAL THREE

Enhance housing quality and affordability while reducing blight in the region.

Objectives include:

- 3.1 Encourage and support the development of more quality and affordable rental and owner-occupied residential housing stock.
- 3.2 Encourage and support the development and/or enforcement of minimum maintenance standards for property.
- 3.3 Encourage and support preservation, rehabilitation, or revitalization of structures, neighborhoods, or other areas.
- 3.4 Educate current and potential homeowners about the risks and responsibilities of ownership.

Vital projects include:

- Continue to support the housing programs administered by the Region 6 Planning Commission, Mid-Iowa Community Action, and other organizations.
- Explore the feasibility of a shared housing inspector for the region.
- Assess current marketing and education methods for housing programs and identify needed improvements.

Suggested projects include:

- Identify methods and potential funding to provide finance and general home ownership training for interested residents and participants in housing programs.

GOAL FOUR

Consider environmental quality, natural disaster resiliency, and overall sustainability in economic development projects in the region.

Objectives include:

- 4.1 Consider water quality and availability economic development projects.
- 4.2 Increase disaster resiliency in cities and counties.
- 4.3 Encourage sustainability of operations in organizations, businesses, and local government.

Vital projects include:

- Complete annual reviews or updates of hazard mitigation plans for cities and counties.
- Create teams to improve sustainability efforts for the public and private sectors.

Suggested projects include:

- Complete energy audits of municipal operations in interested communities.

GOAL FIVE

Support and promote the diversity in culture, community, and attractions in the region. Also promote and support cooperation among organizations, cities, and counties in the region to leverage existing knowledge, experience, and resources.

Objectives include:

- 5.1 Pursue opportunities for collaboration of staff and equipment among organizations, cities, and counties in the region.
- 5.2 Market the region's attractions.

Vital projects include:

- Identify and connect groups and individuals in the region that may benefit from information sharing meetings, e.g. city clerks, public works directors, mayors, etc.
- Collaborate training opportunities at the regional level, e.g. zoning, using TIF districts, local official training, etc.

Suggested projects include:

- Inventory regional amenities and create regional promotion materials.

IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGY

The Regional Development Committee in conjunction with the Region 6 Planning Commission and other identified organizations and individuals will be responsible for implementing the Region 6 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. Having several entities involved may increase the likelihood of success since the diversity of knowledge, skills, and resources in the region are represented through the organizations and individuals involved.

Overall, this strategy will be reviewed periodically by the Regional Development Committee and the Region 6 Planning Commission to ensure all goals and projects are being pursued. Action plans are provided for each project proposed in this strategy so the organizations, activities, and potential outcomes are already determined

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

With regular meetings facilitated by the Region 6 Planning Commission, the Regional Development Committee will be the primary organization guiding the implementation of the Region 6 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. The Committee is long-term with a focus on all regional planning efforts so this strategy and future implementation will be coordinated with other regional planning efforts. Membership of the Committee will remain diverse and also meet Economic Development Administration requirements. For future planning efforts, new members may be added to incorporate new knowledge and expertise.

REGION 6 PLANNING COMMISSION

In order to achieve goals and objectives in this strategy, the Region 6 Planning Commission will be proactive and assist Region 6 counties, cities, organizations, and businesses in a broad range of community and economic development areas. Overall, the work of the Region 6 Economic Development District will maximize the overall economic development goals of Iowa and the nation.

Region 6 Staff Facilitating Committee Meeting



Fisher Community Center in Marshalltown in November 2012

Specifically, the Region 6 Planning Commission will work with the Regional Development Committee, local leaders, industries, economic development and community improvement groups, educational institutions, public agencies, and the private sector to forge strategic partnerships to achieve the goals in this strategy.

To this end, the Region 6 Planning Commission will institute new activities and build on those which are already a part of operations. Region 6 Planning Commission staff currently works with counties and cities to apply for funding and administer low-income housing rehabilitation projects, develop new home construction projects, obtains grants and funding to build community centers, recreational amenities, and wastewater treatment facilities, assist with downtown development, comprehensive planning, and provide assistance with other economic development and funding opportunities.

The Commission solicits and encourages public participation in all aspects of its work. Transportation improvements and enhancements are an integral part of this work, from intermodal facilities development for freight movement, to public transit development, to recreational trail facilities. The Region Six Planning Commission works with counties and cities to plan and implement a regional Transportation Improvement Program. This program is coordinated with the State Transportation Improvement Program. The Region 6 Planning Commission will continue to program the transportation improvements program so transportation policies comply with the region and state's economic development strategies.

Ultimately, the Commission will continue to provide existing services and, as an Economic Development District, will increase its role in developing programs for communities in its service area. The Region 6 Planning Commission will also continue seeking community public participation and input in order to prioritize future community economic development projects in the region.

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR COLLABORATION

Throughout Strategy development, both the public and private sector were involved through Committee participation. For Strategy implementation, the public and private sector will continue to work together to achieve the goals in this strategy. Much of the collaboration will continue through Committee participation, but where appropriate, additional knowledge and resources from either the public or private sector will be incorporated.

On a regular basis, the Region 6 Planning Commission works with economic development organizations, Iowa Valley Community College District, and financial institutions in the region to achieve Strategy goals. The Commission also works with local government, county and city, to achieve economic development goals. Through assistance programs, the Region 6 Planning Commission also works with private individuals and companies in the region.

Several economic development organizations serve Region 6, and these organizations work with the Commission, non-profit organizations, and private companies to attract new companies and finance economic development investments. The directors of these organizations are members of the Regional Development Committee and several other committees supported by the Region 6 Planning Commission. These organizations also refer qualified applicants for assistance programs to the Commission and other organizations in the region.

The Iowa Valley Community College District is a private entity that is extremely important in achieving the education and job skills training component of this strategy. Staff and faculty members are involved in committees and the Commission's board of directors. Overall, the District provides the vital connection between the workforce and companies in the region by providing the educational

opportunities needed to attain skilled or professional employment. The District also collaborates with local companies to ensure the skills and training offered are valuable, and it is essential that collaboration continues and even increases.

In addition, the financial institutions in Region 6 are essential to successful Strategy implementation because these institutions provide access to capital for private investment. In all Commission committees, a financial institution participates to ensure the requirements and challenges in providing financial assistance to the public and private sector is incorporated in the Commission's work. Financial institutions also work with the Region 6 Planning Commission to refer qualified applicants for housing programs and revolving loan funds. Like economic development organizations and the community college district, the region's financial institutions provide a vital link between the public and private sectors.

Other work completed by the Commission that connects the public and private sectors is transportation planning and public transit services. Both transportation planning and public transit services are a major component in this strategy's overall economic development goals for the region. Through transportation planning, both public and private sector needs are considered. Through public transit services, Peoplertides increases public mobility and access to services provided by the private sector such as healthcare. In the transportation and public transit planning process, public input through committees, surveys, and public meetings are used to ensure the transportation system is safe and efficient for all users.

Overall, the public and private sectors will continuously work together to ensure implementation of the goals and projects in this strategy. The Commission and other organizations in the region will be essential in maintaining open communication between the public and private sectors to ensure ideal outcomes.

ACTION PLAN

To complete the projects for each goal in this strategy, individual action plans were created. These action plans include the project description, organizations responsible, specific activities, potential cost and funding, and the potential benefits and impacts of the project. In the case of many projects, more organizations are being identified and the potential economic impacts are not exact.

Goal One Projects

As a reminder, goal one is to retain and increase quality jobs in the region by strengthening existing industries; promoting targeted industries; and strengthening and supporting small businesses, locally-owned businesses, and creative entrepreneurs in the region.

Seven objectives and seven projects were identified for the purpose of achieving goal one by the Regional Development Committee. These projects and accommodating action plans are in the following tables. Please note that action plans may change due to unforeseen circumstances in the region.

Ethanol Refinery in Iowa Falls



Photo Source: www.blog.desmoinesregister.com

Table 35: Project 1.1 Action Plan

Project	Assist with Customer Workforce Plan recommendations being developed by the Iowa Workforce Development Region 6 office.
Organizations Responsible	Regional Development Committee, Region 6 Planning Commission, others to be identified
Activities	Review the plan and provide recommendations as appropriate in the plan development process.
Potential Cost and Funding	Staff time funded by the Commission
Potential Benefits and Economic Impact	More public input from professionals who are involved in workforce issues can be incorporated into the plan. No new jobs are anticipated as a result of this project.

Table 36: Project 1.2 Action Plan

Project	Improve marketing and promotion of the available revolving loan funds in the region by developing a clearinghouse for all revolving loan fund information, assess current marketing techniques, and identify improvements.
Organizations Responsible	Regional Development Committee, Region 6 Planning Commission, organizations in the region with revolving loan funds, and others to be identified
Activities	Inventory all revolving loan funds available in the region and compile the information.
Potential Cost and Funding	Staff time, printing, and informational meeting facilitation funded by the Commission
Potential Benefits and Economic Impact	Revolving loans funds in the region may have an increase in applicants. New jobs may be a result if revolving loans funds assist with future business expansion, but there is no exact estimate.

Table 37: Project 1.3 Action Plan

Project	Compile information about the tax tools and incentives available to cities, counties, and businesses in the region.
Organizations Responsible	Regional Development Committee, Region 6 Planning Commission, economic development organizations, and others to be identified
Activities	Inventory financial opportunities, compile information, and distribute.
Potential Cost and Funding	Staff time, printing, and informational meeting facilitation funded by the Commission
Potential Benefits and Economic Impact	Cities, counties, and businesses in the region may complete more projects that enhance the community or expand services. New jobs may be a result, but there is no exact estimate.

Table 38: Project 1.4 Action Plan

Project	Compile and distribute information about funding opportunities for cities, counties, and organizations in the region.
Organizations Responsible	Region 6 Planning Commission
Activities	Regularly release funding information in newsletters and special information releases
Potential Cost and Funding	Staff time, printing funded by the Commission
Potential Benefits and Economic Impact	Cities, counties, and organizations will be more aware of funding opportunities and may complete more projects that would enhance the community. No new jobs are anticipated as a result of this project.

Table 39: Project 1.5 Action Plan

Project	Inventory vocational training and employment opportunity programs in the region and work with businesses to determine what additional programs may be needed.
Organizations Responsible	Regional Development Committee, Region 6 Planning Commission, Iowa Valley Community College, economic development organizations, and others to be identified
Activities	Inventory programs and meet with businesses to determine whether current programs are sufficient.
Potential Cost and Funding	Staff time funded by the Commission
Potential Benefits and Economic Impact	Vocational training and employment opportunity programs may better match job opportunities in the region or new programs could be developed. No new jobs are anticipated as a result of this project.

Table 41: Project 1.7 Action Plan

Project	Identify and work with employers that could benefit from an employee carpool or rideshare-type program.
Organizations Responsible	Regional Development Committee, Region 6 Planning Commission, Iowa Veterans Home, others to be identified
Activities	Identify opportunities for carpool or rideshare-type programs and assist with organizing.
Potential Cost and Funding	Staff time, the cost of programs is currently unknown
Potential Benefits and Economic Impact	May potentially reduce travel costs for workers, open up job opportunities at companies to people who do not currently have reliable transportation, and decreased missed work days due to transportation. No new jobs are anticipated as a result of this project.

Table 40: Project 1.6 Action Plan

Project	Pursue transportation system improvement funds
Organizations Responsible	Region 6 counties, cities, and Region 6 Planning Commission
Activities	Continue to prepare regional transportation plans and apply for funds.
Potential Cost and Funding	Staff time, transportation projects costs are currently unknown, the majority of costs would be covered by funds awarded, other costs covered by Department of Transportation funding
Potential Benefits and Economic Impact	Improved transportation system in the region to support movement of people and goods. No new jobs are anticipated as a result of this project.

Table 42: Project 1.8 Action Plan

Project	Assess high-speed telecommunication needs in the region
Organizations Responsible	Region 6 Planning Commission, economic development organizations, local telecommunications companies
Activities	Assess needs and identify potential funding sources for improvements
Potential Cost and Funding	Staff time, meeting facilitation, funded by the Commission, improvements would be covered by contributions and/or grant
Potential Benefits and Economic Impact	Improved telecommunications in the region would increase company's efficiency and ensure access to residents. No new jobs are anticipated.

Goal Two Projects

Goal two is to promote and support healthy lifestyles in the region. The Regional Development Committee developed six objectives that focus primarily on healthy food and recreation. A total of six projects were identified to meet the objectives of this goal. These projects and accommodating action plans are included in the following tables. Please note that action plans may change due to unforeseen circumstances in the region.

Table 43: Project 2.1 Action Plan

Project	Complete assessment of access to affordable and healthy food in interested communities.
Organizations Responsible	Region 6 Planning Commission, others to be identified
Activities	Identify interested communities, complete assessments, and determine how improvements can be made in the community.
Potential Cost and Funding	Staff time, training, informational meeting facilitation funded by the Commission or grant
Potential Benefits and Economic Impact	Assessment may identify affordable and healthy food issues that could be addressed in a community. No new jobs are anticipated.

Dale Howard Family Activity Center



Ellsworth Community College in Iowa Falls in 2011

Table 44: Project 2.2 Action Plan

Project	Complete walking and bicycling assessments in interested communities.
Organizations Responsible	Region 6 Planning Commission, others to be identified
Activities	Identify interested communities, complete assessments, and determine how improvements can be made in the community.
Potential Cost and Funding	Staff time, training, informational meeting facilitation funded the Commission or grant
Potential Benefits and Economic Impact	Assessment may identify walking and bicycling issues that could be addressed in a community. No new jobs are anticipated.

Table 45: Project 2.3 Action Plan

Project	Create a team for improving healthy lifestyles on a county wide basis.
Organizations Responsible	Regional Development Committee, Region 6 Planning Commission, others to be identified
Activities	Identify individuals and organizations in the region for team membership and organize meetings.
Potential Cost and Funding	Staff time, meeting facilitation funded by the Commission
Potential Benefits and Economic Impact	Countywide teams with a healthy lifestyle focus may affect positive outcomes that enhance quality of life. No new jobs are anticipated as a result of this project.

Table 46: Project 2.4 Action Plan

Project	Identify the need for indoor recreation facilities and related funding opportunities for the region.
Organizations Responsible	Region 6 Planning Commission, countywide healthy lifestyle teams, others to be identified
Activities	Identify communities with recreation facilities needs and funding opportunities.
Potential Cost and Funding	Staff time funded by the Commission
Potential Benefits and Economic Impact	Additional recreation opportunities could enhance quality of life. New jobs may be an impact, but there is no exact estimate.

Table 47: Project 2.5 Action Plan

Project	Increase marketing of public transit options in the region.
Organizations Responsible	Peoplerides, Region 6 Planning Commission, others to be identified
Activities	Increase marketing through promotional materials, website, and word of mouth.
Potential Cost and Funding	Staff time, printing cost, possibly advertising fees funded by the Commission and Peoplerides
Potential Benefits and Economic Impact	More marketing may result in more rides provided to residents of the region, which increases overall mobility and access. No new jobs are anticipated.

Table 48: Project 2.6 Action Plan

Project	Complete a focus group of young professionals in the region to identify their quality of life needs and concerns.
Organizations Responsible	Regional Development Committee, Region 6 Planning Commission, economic development organizations, young professionals organizations, others to be identified
Activities	Determine topics, identify individuals to participate, and facilitate focus group. With results, identify improvements that could be made in the region.
Potential Cost and Funding	Staff time, focus group facilitation funded by the Commission and possibly economic development organizations
Potential Benefits and Economic Impact	If improvements identified for the region are completed, the retention of young professional in the region could increase. At this point, no new jobs are anticipated as a result of the project.

Goal Three Projects

Goal three is to enhance housing quality and affordability while reducing blight in the region. Housing is a continuous priority in Region 6, which is evident in the work currently being completed by the Region 6 Planning Commission, Mid-Iowa Community Action, Habitat, and other organizations involved with housing in the region.

To achieve this goal, four objectives and four projects were identified by the Regional Development Committee. Projects and accommodating action plans are included in the following tables. Please note that action plans may change due to unforeseen circumstances in the region.

Table 49: Project 3.1 Action Plan

Project	Explore the feasibility of a shared housing inspector for the region.
Organizations Responsible	Region 6 Planning Commission, others to be identified
Activities	Identify cities and counties interested in housing inspection services and possible methods for funding a position in the region.
Potential Cost and Funding	Staff time funded by the Commission, inspector cost would be financed through county/city contribution or grant
Potential Benefits and Economic Impact	Housing inspection services in cities and counties could improve housing quality and appearance in the region. At least one new job would result from the completion of this project.

Table 50: Project 3.2 Action Plan

Project	Assess current marketing and education methods for housing programs and identify needed improvements.
Organizations Responsible	Regional Development Committee, Region 6 Planning Commission, Region 6 Housing Trust Fund, others to be identified
Activities	Assess current methods and make needed improvements.
Potential Cost and Funding	Staff time, informational meeting facilitation, funded by the Commission
Potential Benefits and Economic Impact	Improved marketing may increase applicants for housing programs and improve housing conditions in the region. No new jobs are anticipated as a result of the project.

Table 51: Project 3.3 Action Plan

Project	Identify methods and potential funding to provide finance and general home ownership training for interested residents and participants in housing programs.
Organizations Responsible	Regional Development Committee, Region 6 Planning Commissions, Region 6 Housing Trust Fund, others to be identified
Activities	Identify methods and potential funding.
Potential Cost and Funding	Staff time, informational meeting facilitation, funded by the Commission, program costs would be covered by housing programs or grant
Potential Benefits and Economic Impact	Potential for improved housing program outcomes and overall homeowner financing in the region. No new jobs are anticipated as a result of the project.

Table 52: Project 3.4 Action Plan

Project	Continue to support the housing programs administered by the Region 6 Planning Commission, Mid-Iowa Community Action, and other organizations.
Organizations Responsible	Region 6 Planning Commission, MICA, others to be identified
Activities	Continue administering housing programs in the region.
Potential Cost and Funding	Staff time funded by the Commission
Potential Benefits and Economic Impact	Improved housing conditions in the region. No new jobs are anticipated as a result of the project, although existing jobs would be sustained.

Goal Four Projects

Goal four is to consider environmental quality, natural disaster resiliency, and overall sustainability in economic development projects in the region. The Regional Development Committee developed three objectives and three goals to achieve this environmental goal.

The projects and accommodating action plan are included in the following tables. Please note that action plans may change due to unforeseen circumstances in the region.

Table 53: Project 4.1 Action Plan

Project	Complete annual reviews or updates of hazard mitigation plans for cities and counties.
Organizations Responsible	Region 6 Planning Commission, Region 6 counties and cities, emergency management
Activities	Complete reviews and updates annually.
Potential Cost and Funding	Staff time, meeting facilitation funded by the Commission and/or county/city contributions
Potential Benefits and Economic Impact	May reduce loss of life, damage to property, and major disruption. No new jobs are anticipated.

Table 54: Project 4.2 Action Plan

Project	Create teams to improve sustainability efforts for the public and private sectors.
Organizations Responsible	Regional Development Committee, Region 6 Planning Commissions, others to be identified
Activities	Identify individuals and organizations for membership and organize meetings.
Potential Cost and Funding	Staff time, meeting facilitation, funded by the Commission and/or grant
Potential Benefits and Economic Impact	Countywide teams with a sustainability focus may affect positive outcomes in both the public and private sector that enhance operations efficiency and quality of life. A sustainability coordinator at the regional level may be a new job resulting from this project.

Table 55: Project 4.3 Action Plan

Project	Complete energy audits of municipal operations in interested communities.
Organizations Responsible	Regional Development Committee, Region 6 Planning Commission, local energy producers and distributors, others to be identified
Activities	Identify interested communities, complete audits, and identify improvements.
Potential Cost and Funding	Staff time, training, informational meeting facilitation, funded by the Commission and/or grant
Potential Benefits and Economic Impact	Increased energy efficiency in the region could reduce overall energy costs for residents and businesses. No new jobs are anticipated as a result of the project.

Goal Five Projects

Goal five is to support and promote the diversity in culture, community, and attractions in the region. Also promote and support cooperation among organizations, cities, and counties in the region to leverage existing knowledge, experience, and resources. This goal focuses on building relationships in order to efficiently use the knowledge, expertise, and resources in the region.

Two main objectives and three projects were identified by the Regional Development Committee to complete this goal. The projects and accommodating action plans are included in the following tables. Please note that action plans may change due to unknown circumstances in the region.

Table 56: Project 5.1 Action Plan

Project	Inventory regional amenities and create regional promotion materials.
Organizations Responsible	Regional Development Committee, Region 6 Planning Commission, economic development organizations, others to be identified
Activities	Identify unique amenities and attractions in the region, design promotional materials, and distribute.
Potential Cost and Funding	Staff time, printing cost, possibly design services, funded by the Commission, economic development organization, and/or grant
Potential Benefits and Economic Impact	Promotional materials may increase awareness of amenities and attractions in the region and attract more visitors. No new jobs are anticipated.

Table 57: Project 5.2 Action Plan

Project	Identify and connect groups and individuals in the region that may benefit from information sharing meetings, e.g. city clerks, public works directors, mayors, etc.
Organizations Responsible	Regional Development Committee, Region 6 Planning Commission, others to be identified
Activities	Identify appropriate groups and contacts and organize meetings.
Potential Cost and Funding	Staff time, meeting facilitation, funded by the Commission, groups involved, and/or grant
Potential Benefits and Economic Impact	More information and resource sharing may result in improved service provision, efficient use of resources, and potential for collaboration. No new jobs are anticipated as a result of the project.

Table 58: Project 5.3 Action Plan

Project	Collaborate training opportunities at the regional level, e.g. zoning, using TIF districts, local official training, etc.
Organizations Responsible	Regional Development Committee, Region 6 Planning Commission, economic development organizations, others to be identified
Activities	When appropriate, combine resources to provide additional training opportunities throughout the region.
Potential Cost or Funding	Staff time, training/session fee, funded by the Commission, participating counties/cities, and/or grant
Potential Benefits and Economic Impact	Additional training opportunities can be made available in the region. No new jobs are anticipated as a result of the project.

MONITORING STRATEGY PROGRESS

In order to ensure that the Region Six Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy remains a living document that is relevant to the shifting challenges and opportunities in the region, the Regional Development Committee will meet at least once each year to evaluate progress in the implementation of this strategy's goals, objectives, and action plans for vital projects. This will be a public meeting, and a written report will be provided to Region 6 counties, cities, and the public through the Region 6 Planning Commission website.

Monitoring the progress in the implementation of this strategy will be the responsibility of the Region 6 Planning Commission staff with guidance from the Regional Development Committee. Evaluating the effectiveness of the strategies and preparation of an evaluation document will also be accomplished by the Commission staff. Reports will be prepared quarterly in accordance with Economic Development Administration requirements.

This evaluation will include both quantitative and qualitative measures of performance. Quantitative measure will include the following:

- Number of jobs created in the region
- Number of jobs retained in the region
- Number and type of investments in the region
- Amount of private sector investments in the region
- Changes in the economic environment of the region

More qualitative methods of measuring progress include word of mouth, client surveys, and personal interviews, which will give the Commission valuable information about the progress of individual projects and how they are perceived by the public. Periodic focus groups will also invite public input for improvement or adjustment to this strategy's goals, projects plan, and implementation procedures.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Regional Development Committee Participation

Appendix B: Committee Meeting Materials

Appendix C: Information Releases

Appendix D: Survey Tools and Results

APPENDIX A: REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE PARTICIPATION

Name	10/10/2012 Meeting Attendance	Remote/Survey Participation	11/7/2012 Meeting Attendance	Remote/Survey Participation
Daryl Albertson	Y	N	N	N
Jody Anderson	Y	N	N	Y
Russ Behrens	-	-	N	N
Lyle Brehm	Y	Y	Y	Y
Deb Collum-Calderwood	Y	N	N	N
Monica Chavez-Silva	Y	Y	N	N
Tina Coleman	Y	Y	N	N
Deb Crosser	Y	Y	Y	N
Tom Deimerly	N	N	Y	N
Paul Geilenfeldt	Y	Y	Y	Y
Paul Gregoire	Y	N	Y	N
Cindy Litwiller	Y	Y	Y	N
Mike Nuss	Y	Y	Y	Y
Charlie Smith	Y	Y	Y	Y
Jason Staker	Y	Y	N	Y
Rich Stone	Y	Y	Y	Y
Randy Wetmore	Y	Y	N	N
Larry Wolf	N	Y	N	N
David Worley	Y	Y	Y	N
Dan Zimmerman/John Lloyd	Y	Y	Y	Y
Sally Wilson	Y	Y	N	N
Terence Blaine	Y	Y	Y	N
Heath Kellogg	Y	Y	Y	N
Brandon Shaw	Y	Y	Y	N

APPENDIX B: COMMITTEE MEETING MATERIALS

See following pages.

REGION 6
REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT
COMMITTEE

**Meeting #1 - CEDS Development
Information Packet**

Date, Time, and Location

October 10, 2012
2 PM – 4 PM
Marshalltown Public Library

Facilitated By

Region 6 Planning Commission
903 East Main Street
Marshalltown, IA 50158
Phone: (641) 752-0717
Website: www.region6planning.org



MEETING PREPARATION

For everyone to complete before participating in the meeting

One thing, please! Please review an audio-guided PowerPoint presentation, which will serve as your introduction to an EDA-approved comprehensive economic development strategy (CEDS). This PowerPoint has either been sent to you personally, or you can download the presentation on the Regional Development Initiative webpage. The webpage can be accessed at the link below. Just scroll to the last section of the webpage and download the presentation.

Link: [Regional Development Initiative webpage](#)

If you have difficulty downloading the presentation or have questions, please contact Alicia Presto by email at apresto@region6planning.org or by phone at (641) 751-0517.

For anyone who cannot attend the meeting

If you are a Committee member or an interested resident of the Region 6 area who is not able to attend the first Committee meeting, your feedback is still needed in the development process for the Region 6 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)! Please complete just three things.

First, review an audio-guided PowerPoint presentation, which will serve as your introduction to an EDA-approved CEDS. This PowerPoint has either been sent to you personally, or you can download the presentation on the Regional Development Initiative webpage. The webpage can be accessed at the link below. Just scroll to the last section of the webpage and download the presentation.

Link: [Regional Development Initiative webpage](#)

If you have difficulty downloading the presentation or have questions, please contact Alicia Presto by email at apresto@region6planning.org or by phone at (641) 751-0517.

Second, please independently complete a SWOT analysis for the county you represent within the Region 6 area. Instructions and materials for a SWOT analysis can be found on pages 4 and 5 of this packet. It is preferable that your SWOT analysis is submitted **before** October 10, 2012 so your information can be used at the Committee meeting. Submissions will be accepted after the meeting until October 17, 2012.

Third, if you would like to provide input on goals for the region, please review investment priorities and other considerations on pages 6-7 of this packet and submit your thoughts and ideas. Submission preferences and timeline are the same as the SWOT analysis.

Please submit your thoughts and ideas to Alicia Presto by email at apresto@region6planning.org or in writing at 903 East Main Street, Marshalltown, IA 50158. Thank you in advance for your participation!

MEETING AGENDA

1. Region 6 Planning Commission staff and committee member self-introductions, see current membership on page 8 of this packet (5 minutes)
2. SWOT analysis in groups by county (20 - 30 minutes)
3. Share SWOT analysis and identify common themes within region (20 - 30 minutes)
4. Discuss Economic Development Administration priorities and other considerations, pages 6-7 of this packet, then brainstorm goals for the region (20 - 30 minutes)
5. Discuss the next steps in the CEDS development process and the date and agenda for the next Regional Development Committee meeting (5 minutes)

SWOT ANALYSIS INSTRUCTIONS

These instructions are for people who cannot attend the Committee meeting.

A SWOT analysis is used to identify your county's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to achieving a particular objective. In Hardin, Marshall, Poweshiek, and Tama County, the basic objective is to strengthen and expand the economy. Commonalities between the four counties will be used to complete a regional SWOT analysis that will be used to form the economic development goals, objectives, and projects for the region.

While identifying strengths and weaknesses, think about the existing elements of the county that can either help or hinder economic development. Strengths and weaknesses can be physical assets, human capital, technology, organizations, businesses, or anything you believe is important to the economy. To identify opportunities and threats, think about the forces, both internal and external, that could affect the county's strengths, weaknesses, and overall economy. You can be creative! To help, an example SWOT analysis is provided below. The form to use for your analysis is on the following page.

Example SWOT Analysis

SWOT ANALYSIS

	Helpful to achieving the objective	Hamful to achieving the objective
Internal origin (attributes of the organization)	<p>Strong K – 12 education</p> <p>Extra water treatment capacity</p> <p>Strengths</p> <p>Globally competitive businesses</p> <p>Farmers market</p> <p>Trails</p>	<p>Lack of retail options</p> <p>Lack of housing options</p> <p>Weaknesses</p> <p>Unemployment</p> <p>Limited public transit</p>
External origin (attributes of the environment)	<p>Job training and placement</p> <p>Telecommuting</p> <p>Opportunities</p> <p>Median priced housing developers</p> <p>Private investment</p>	<p>Job outsourcing</p> <p>Reduced federal and state funding</p> <p>Threats</p> <p>Natural disasters</p> <p>Price of fuel</p>

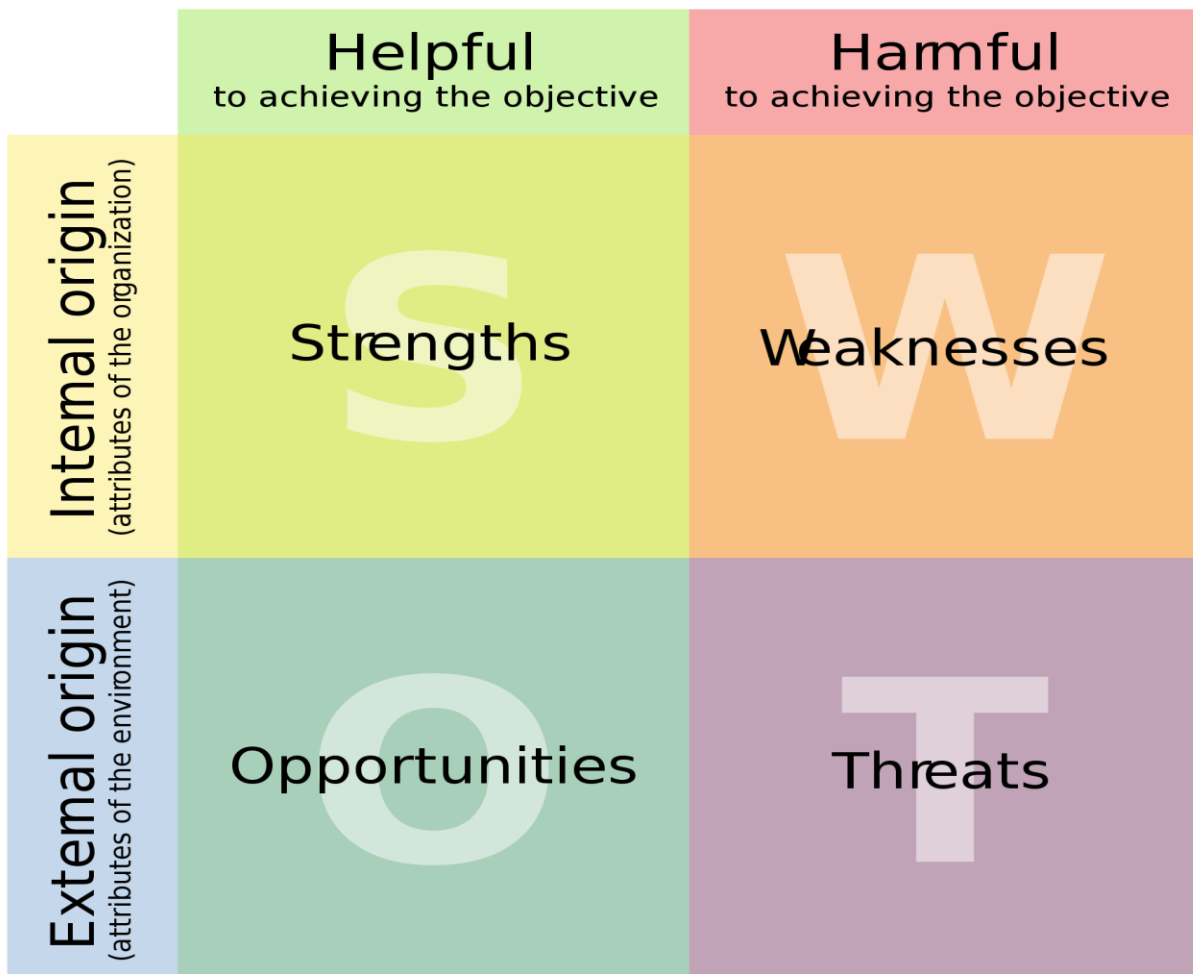
County:

Your name:

Your organization (if applicable):

Date completed:

SWOT ANALYSIS



Source: Wikipedia, September 2012

Additional Notes or Comments:

INVESTMENT PRIORITIES AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS FOR GOAL FORMATION

Economic Development Administration's Investment Priorities

1. Collaborative Regional Innovation

Develop existing regional competitive strengths and support the growth of existing and emerging industries. A few, but not all, economic clusters identified for the region are energy production and food production and processing. Please share others and discuss.

2. Public-private partnerships

Use both public and private sector resources to achieve economic development goals. More investment funds can be made available for projects if public or nonprofit funds can be leveraged to gain additional investment from the public sector.

3. National strategic priorities

National priorities include:

- job growth and business expansion related to advanced manufacturing
- information technology infrastructure
- communities severely impacted by automotive industry restructuring
- urban waters
- natural disaster mitigation and resiliency
- access to capital for small, medium sized, and ethnically diverse enterprises
- innovations in science and health care

Priorities that apply to the region should be incorporated into goals, objectives, and projects. Please share and discuss applicable priorities.

4. Global Competitiveness

Develop a strategy that supports businesses and entrepreneurs that could expand and compete in global markets. Consider investments that can expand exports, foreign direct investment, and bring jobs back to the United States.

Continue to next page

5. Environmentally Sustainable Development

The Economic Development Administration encourages sustainable development through projects that enhance environmental quality and develop and implement green processes, places, products, and buildings. Energy efficient, green technologies are strongly encouraged.

Other Considerations

Aside from the Economic Development Administration's priorities, Region 6 has identified other important considerations based on Iowa's economic development priorities and past experience working in the region. Other considerations include:

- *Consider quality of life aspect of sustainability*
 - Health
 - Housing
 - Meeting the varied needs of baby boomers, young professionals, families, etc.
 - Supporting a culturally diverse region
 - Public transit
 - General transportation alternatives
 - Recreation and entertainment
- *Job training and placement, e.g. training programs to meet existing industries' workforce needs*
- *Infrastructure, e.g. water, transportation, information technology, etc.*
- *Freight*
 - Rail
 - Truck

Please share and discuss other considerations that are important in forming economic development goals for the region.

CURRENT COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Membership is still being finalized. Several individuals who were invited will confirm membership after the first Regional Development Committee meeting due to time commitment or other concerns. If you know anyone who may be interested in participating in the Committee, suggestions will be considered.

*Regional Development Committee Membership**

Name	Position	Affiliation	Type
Daryl Albertson	County Engineer	Hardin County	Public
Jody Anderson	City Manager	Iowa Falls	Public
Russ Behrens	City Manager	Grinnell	Public
Lyle Brehm	County Engineer	Poweshiek and Tama County	Public
Deb Collum-Calderwood	Director	Poweshiek Iowa Development	Private
Monica Chavez-Silva	Director of Community Enhancement and Engagement	Grinnell College	Private
Tina Coleman	Director of Public Health and Homecare	Marshalltown Medical Center	Private
Deb Crosser	Director	Eldora Economic Development	Private
Tom Deimerly/Kenn Vinson	President/Business Manager	Marshall Economic Development Impact Committee	Private
Paul Geilenfeldt	County Engineer	Marshall County	Public
Paul Gregoire	Vice President of Human Resources	Emerson Fisher Controls	Private
Cindy Litwiller	Director	Iowa Falls Area Development	Private
Mike Nuss	City Administrator	Ackley	Public
Cindy Schulte	Director of Governmental Affairs	Marshalltown Community College	Private
Charlie Smith		Iowa Valley Bicycle Club	Private
Jason Staker	President	Marshalltown Young Professionals	Private
Rich Stone	Transit Manager	Marshalltown	Public
Randy Wetmore	City Administrator	Marshalltown	Public
Larry Wolf	Vice President	Hardin County Savings Bank	Private
David Worley	Commandant	Iowa Veterans Home	Public
Dan Zimmerman	Mayor	Tama	Public

* This list is current as of 10/8/12

Regional Development Committee Balance

Type	Number
Public	10
Private	11

EDA requires 51% private membership

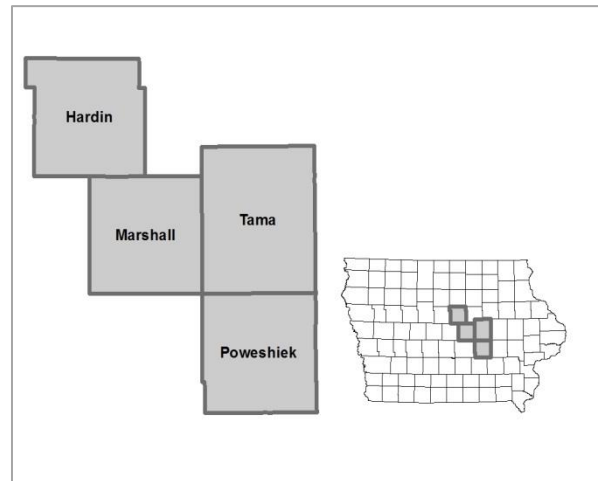
If you have questions or member suggestions, please submit them to Alicia Presto by email at apresto@region6planning.org or by phone at (641) 751-0517.

INFORMATION RELEASE

Region 6 Planning Commission Facilitates Development of Region Wide Economic Development Strategy with Regional Development Committee

October 8, 2012

Every five years, the Region 6 Planning Commission develops a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the region including Hardin, Marshall, Poweshiek, and Tama County. This strategy will be developed according to Economic Development Administration requirements and guidance provided by a region wide committee, the Regional Development Committee. The purpose of a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy is to identify goals and projects to strengthen and diversify the region's economy.



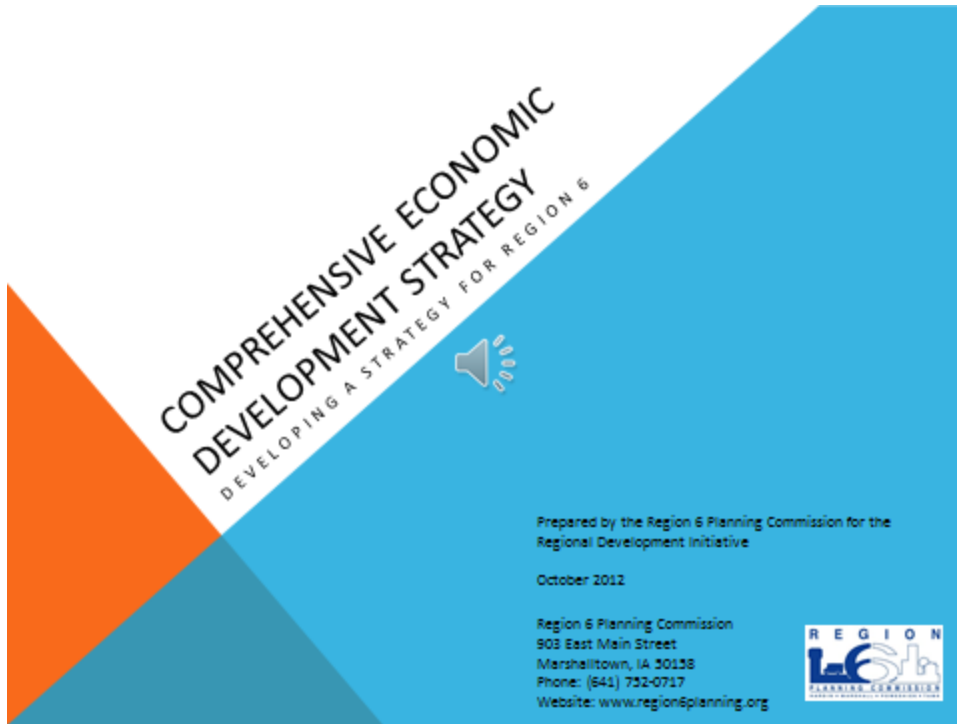
The first of two committee meetings in the strategy development process will be held Wednesday, October 10 at 2 PM in the Marshalltown Public Library. Members of the public are encouraged to attend and participate at this meeting along with committee members. There is also an opportunity for people who cannot attend the meeting to share their thoughts and ideas. Meeting materials and public input instructions are available online at the website address below.

<http://www.region6planning.org/Region6PlanningCommission/RegionalDevelopmentInitiative.aspx>

Paper copies of materials and instructions are also available at the Region 6 Planning Commission at 903 East Main Street, Marshalltown, IA. You can request materials and instructions by contacting Alicia Presto at the Region 6 Planning Commission by email at apresto@region6planning.org or by phone at (641) 751-0517.

In early November, there will be one more committee meeting to finish the strategy development process. There will also be a 30-day public comment period for the draft strategy that will begin in late November. More information and dates will be released in late October. The comprehensive economic development strategy must be submitted to the Economic Development Administration for approval by December 31, 2012.

For more information, please contact Alicia Presto at the Region 6 Planning Commission with the contact information provided above.



FIRST, FOR THE SAKE OF SIMPLICITY

Use the common acronym...

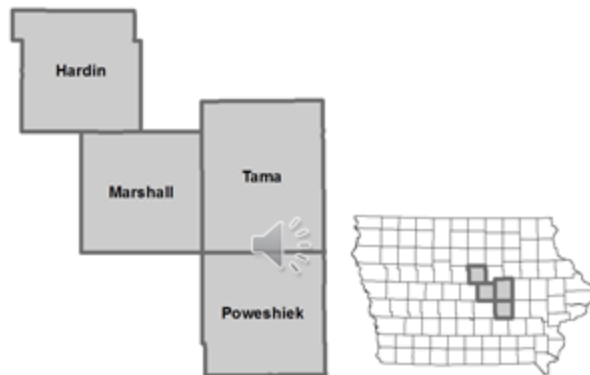
Comprehensive Economic
Development Strategy = C E D S
Pronounced "saiDs"

Or just call it...

the Strategy



NEXT, WHAT IS REGION 6?



NOW, THE PURPOSE OF A CEDS

The most basic purpose is to serve as...

“an economic roadmap to diversify and strengthen regional economies.”

– Economic Development Administration

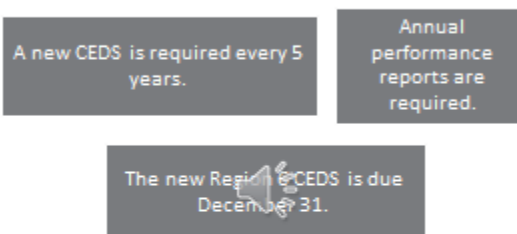


WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF A CEDS?



THESE ARE THE REQUIREMENTS

For strategy development



Note: Requirements are based on current Economic Development Administration guidance.

THESE ARE THE REQUIREMENTS

For a committee

A committee is responsible for developing, revising, or replacing the CEDS.

Committee membership must have a majority that represents the main economic interests of the region.

Committee membership should include public officials, community leaders, representatives of workforce development boards, institutions of higher education, minority and labor groups, and private individuals.

Note: Requirements are based on current Economic Development Administration guidance.



THESE ARE THE REQUIREMENTS

For strategy contents and public comment

The CEDS must include background information about the region and an analysis of economic development problems and opportunities.

The actual strategy must consist of goals, objectives, projects, plan of action, and a discussion of how the community and private sector can work together in achieving goals.

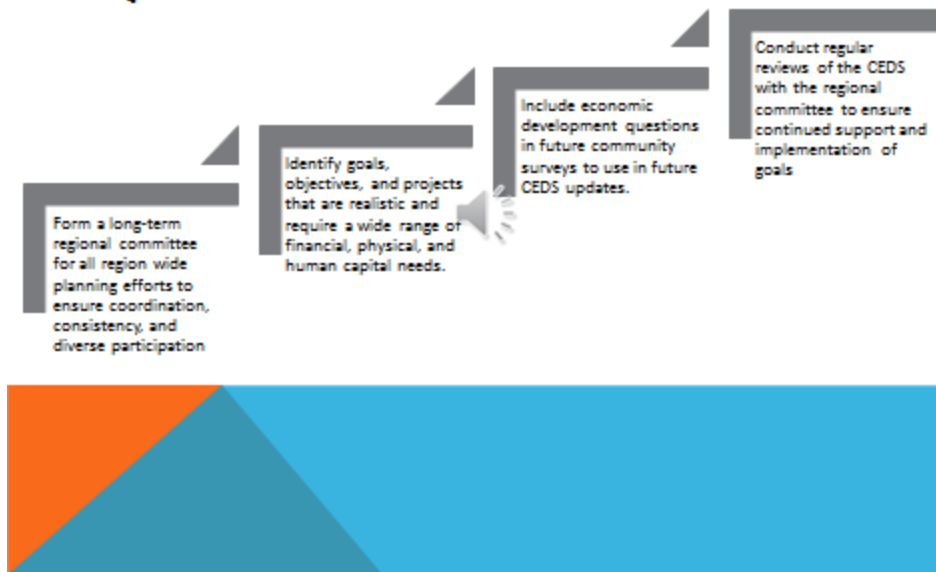
The CEDS must include indicators to gauge economic development success in the region.

A 30-day public comment period is required.

Note: Requirements are based on current Economic Development Administration guidance.



ADDING VALUE BEYOND THE REQUIREMENTS



CURRENT CEDS DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES



UPCOMING CEDS DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Two formal committee meetings with remote participation opportunities and finalizing committee membership	Identify the region's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats and finalize basic background information with Committee guidance	Identify the region's goals, objectives, and projects with Committee guidance
Create an action plan for implementing goals, objectives, and projects with Committee guidance	Determine appropriate indicators of economic development success with Committee guidance	Complete a draft of the CEDS to allow for a 30 day public comment period and make revisions before submission for approval



YOUR QUESTIONS OR SUGGESTIONS

Please contact Alicia Presto at the Region 6 Planning Commission

903 East Main Street
Marshalltown, IA 50158

Main Office Phone: (641) 752-0717
Direct Phone Line: (641) 751-0517

Email: apresto@region6planning.org



Website: www.region6planning.org



REGION 6
REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT
COMMITTEE

**Meeting #2 - CEDS Development
Information Packet**

Date, Time, and Location

November 7, 2012
2 PM – 4 PM
Fisher Community Center
709 South Center Street
Marshalltown, IA 50158

Facilitated By

Region 6 Planning Commission
903 East Main Street
Marshalltown, IA 50158
Phone: (641) 752-0717
Website: www.region6planning.org



MEETING PREPARATION

For everyone to complete before participating in the meeting

Complete a survey to finalize goals and objectives for the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. This survey can be accessed at the link below.

Link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/CEDSGoalsSurvey>

If you have any questions or difficulty completing the online survey, please contact Alicia Presto by email at apresto@region6planning.org or by phone at (641) 751-0517.

MEETING AGENDA

1. Region 6 Planning Commission staff and committee member self-introductions, see current membership on page 4 of this packet (5 minutes)
2. Review goals and objectives (10 minutes)
3. Brainstorm projects to complete goals and objectives (60 – 70 minutes)
4. Discuss next steps in Strategy development process (5 minutes)

CURRENT COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Membership is still being finalized. Several individuals who were invited will confirm membership after the first Regional Development Committee meeting due to time commitment or other concerns. If you know anyone who may be interested in participating in the Committee, suggestions will be considered.

*Regional Development Committee Membership**

Name	Position	Affiliation	Type
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Monica Chavez-Silva	Director of Community Enhancement and Engagement	Grinnell College	Private
Tina Coleman	Director of Public Health and Homecare	MMSC	Private
Deb Crosser	Director	Eldora Economic Development	Private
Tom Deimerly	President/Business Manager	MEDIC	Private
Paul Geilenfeldt	County Engineer	Marshall County	Public
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Larry Wolf	Vice President	Hardin County Savings Bank	Private
David Worley	Commandant	Iowa Veterans Home	Public
Dan Zimmerman	Mayor	Tama	Public
Cindy Schulte	Director of Governmental Affairs	Marshalltown Community College	Private
Sally Wilson	Entrepreneurial Agriculture Center	Marshalltown Community College	Private
Terence Blaine	Director	Montezuma Community Development	Private
Heath Kellogg	Director	Tama County Economic Development	Private

* This list is current as of 10/31/12

Regional Development Committee Balance

Type	Number
Public	10
Private	14

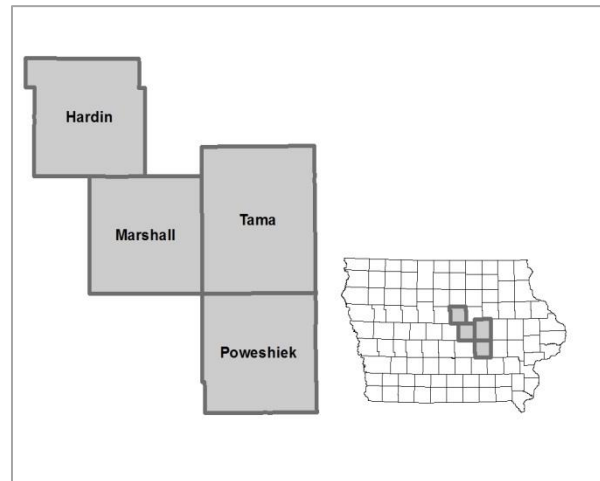
EDA requires 51% private membership

INFORMATION RELEASE

Region 6 Planning Commission Facilitates Development of an Economic Development Strategy for the Region

November 1, 2012

Every five years, the Region 6 Planning Commission develops a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the region including Hardin, Marshall, Poweshiek, and Tama County. This strategy will be developed according to Economic Development Administration requirements and guidance provided by a region wide committee, the Regional Development Committee. The purpose of a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy is to identify goals and projects to strengthen and diversify the region's economy.



The second of two committee meetings in the strategy development process will be held Wednesday, November 7, 2012 at 2 PM in the Fisher Community Center in Marshalltown. The main purpose of this meeting is to brainstorm projects to complete economic development goals for the region. Members of the public are encouraged to attend and participate at this meeting along with committee members. There is also an opportunity for people who cannot attend the meeting to share their thoughts and ideas. Meeting materials and public input instructions are available online at the website address below.

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There will be a 30-day public comment period for the draft strategy that will begin in late November. The comprehensive economic development strategy must be submitted to the Economic Development Administration for approval by December 31, 2012.

For more information, please contact Alicia Presto at the Region 6 Planning Commission with the contact information provided above.

APPENDIX C: INFORMATION RELEASES

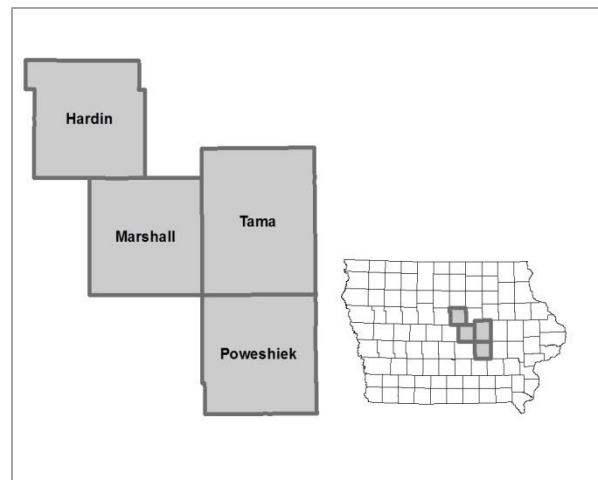
See following pages.

INFORMATION RELEASE

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October 8, 2012

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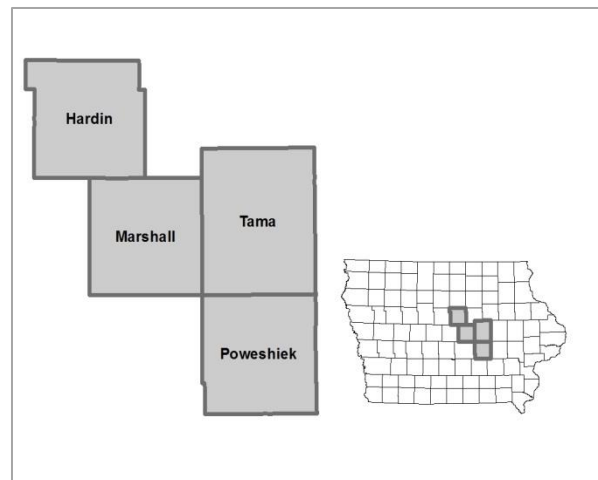
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INFORMATION RELEASE

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November 1, 2012

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There will be a 30-day public comment period for the draft strategy that will begin in late November. The comprehensive economic development strategy must be submitted to the Economic Development Administration for approval by December 31, 2012.

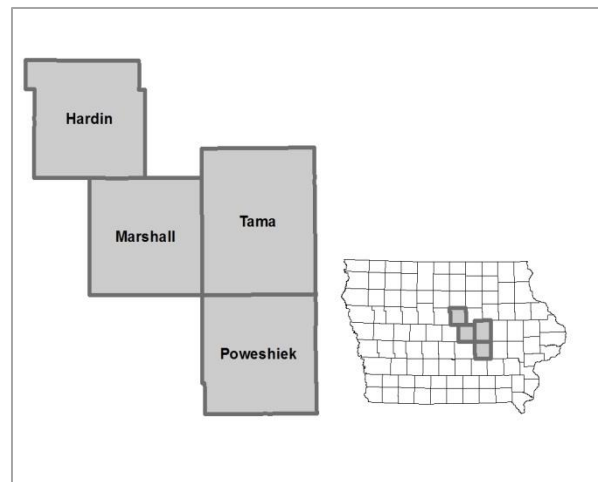
For more information, please contact Alicia Presto at the Region 6 Planning Commission with the contact information provided above.

INFORMATION RELEASE

30-day Comment Period Opened for Economic Development Goals and Projects for Hardin, Marshall, Tama, and Poweshiek County

November 30, 2012

Every five years, the Region 6 Planning Commission develops a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the region including Hardin, Marshall, Poweshiek, and Tama County. This strategy has been developed according to Economic Development Administration requirements and guidance provided by a region wide committee, the Regional Development Committee. The purpose of a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy is to identify goals and projects to strengthen and diversify the region's economy.




A 30-day public comment period will begin December 1, 2012 and end December 31, 2012. A draft of economic development goals, objectives, and projects and a full draft of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy will be available on the Region 6 Planning Commission website and by request. If you would like to request a copy or provide comments, please contact Alicia Presto at the Region 6 Planning Commission by email at apresto@region6planning.org or by phone at (641) 751-0517.

It is most important to receive public comments on the goals, objectives, and projects for the region. These goals and projects will dictate the potential outcomes of this economic development planning effort. In order to submit the Strategy by the December 31st deadline, the comments received during the public comment period will be incorporated as they are received by the Region 6 Planning Commission. In addition, the Region 6 Planning Commission will review and enhance the document to ensure the following: recent data is included, topics are discussed to their full extent, and all requirements are fulfilled.

For more information, please contact Alicia Presto at the Region 6 Planning Commission with the contact information provided above.

APPENDIX D: SURVEY TOOLS AND RESULTS

Survey One

Region 6 CEDS Goals and Objectives Survey 










1. To keep track of which Regional Development Committee members have provided feedback, what is your name? If you are not a Committee member or wish to remain anonymous, please skip this question.

	Response Count
	20
answered question	20
skipped question	1

2. Please provide feedback on goal one. Goal 1 - Retain and increase quality jobs in the region by strengthening existing industries; promoting targeted industries; strengthening and supporting small businesses, locally-owned businesses, and creative entrepreneurs in the region. Note: Targeted industries identified by the Iowa Economic Development Authority include advanced manufacturing, renewable energy, biosciences, information technology, financial services, and food manufacturing.

	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes, this goal is appropriate.	90.5%	19
No, this goal is not appropriate.	0.0%	0
This goal needs to be edited (please specify below).	9.5%	2
answered question		21
skipped question		0

3. Please choose appropriate objectives for the goal above. You can choose as many objectives as you deem appropriate and/or provide your thoughts and suggestions.

		Response Percent	Response Count
Match job skill training opportunities with available jobs in the region.		90.6%	19
Ensure access to capital.		66.7%	14
Ensure provision of business assistance to small and start up businesses.		52.4%	11
Ensure provision of professional development opportunities for youth in the region.		52.4%	11
Provide a transportation system that supports the safe and efficient movement of people and goods in the region.		42.9%	9
Provide an infrastructure system to ensure homes and businesses have access to water, energy, and information technology that is safe and reliable.		57.1%	12
Ensure access to jobs through transportation alternatives.		28.6%	6
Increase community patronage of local businesses through education and promotion.		38.1%	8
Other (please specify below)		19.0%	4
		answered question	21
		skipped question	0




4. Please provide feedback on goal two. Goal 2 - Promote and support healthy lifestyles in the region.

	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes, this goal is appropriate.	85.7%	18
No, this goal is not appropriate.	4.8%	1
This goal needs to be edited (please specify below).	9.5%	2
answered question		21
skipped question		0



5. Please identify appropriate objectives for the goal above. You can choose as many objectives as you deem appropriate and/or provide your thoughts and suggestions.

	Response Percent	Response Count
Ensure access to affordable and healthy food.	71.4%	15
Ensure access and continued support for recreational facilities, indoor or outdoor.	80.6%	18
Provide safe and accessible pedestrian and bicycle facilities.	66.7%	14
Ensure access and continued support for public transit service.	28.6%	6
Provide the basic needs of all generations, young and elder.	47.6%	10
Other (please specify below)	4.8%	1
answered question		21
skipped question		0




6. Please provide feedback on goal three. Goal 3 - Enhance housing quality, affordability, and the overall appearance of the region.

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes, this goal is appropriate.		96.2%	20
No, this goal is not appropriate.		0.0%	0
This goal needs to be edited (please specify below).		4.8%	1
		answered question	21
		skipped question	0






7. Please identify appropriate objectives for the goal above. You can choose as many objectives as you deem appropriate and/or provide your thoughts and suggestions.

		Response Percent	Response Count
Encourage and support the development of quality and affordable rental and owner-occupied residential housing stock.		85.7%	18
Reduce blight in the region.		71.4%	15
Encourage and support the preservation, rehabilitation, or revitalization of structures, neighborhoods or other areas in the region.		85.7%	18
Other (please specify)		9.5%	2
		answered question	21
		skipped question	0

8. Please provide feedback on goal four. Goal 4 - Ensure the consideration of environmental quality, natural disaster resiliency, and overall sustainability in economic development projects.

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes, this goal is appropriate.		85.7%	18
No, this goal is not appropriate.		4.8%	1
This goal needs to be edited (please specify below).		9.5%	2
		answered question	21
		skipped question	0

9. Please identify appropriate objectives for the goal above. You can choose as many objectives as you deem appropriate and/or provide your thoughts and suggestions.

		Response Percent	Response Count
Encourage water quality and availability consideration in economic development projects.		57.1%	12
Encourage disaster resiliency consideration in economic development projects.		42.9%	9
Encourage business continuity planning in the region.		57.1%	12
Encourage sustainability of operations in organizations, businesses, cities, and counties in the region.		78.2%	18
Other (please specify)		23.8%	5
		answered question	21
		skipped question	0

10. Please provide feedback on goal five. Goal 5 - Support and promote the diversity of culture, community, and attractions in the region. Also promote and support cooperation among organizations, cities, and counties in the region to leverage existing knowledge, experiences, and resources.

	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes, this goal is appropriate.	86.2%	20
No, this goal is not appropriate.	0.0%	0
This goal needs to be edited (please specify below).	4.8%	1
answered question		21
skipped question		0

11. Please identify appropriate objectives for the goal above. You can choose as many objectives as you deem appropriate and/or provide your thoughts and suggestions.

	Response Percent	Response Count
Increase the amount of knowledge and resources shared among organizations, cities, and counties in the region.	76.2%	16
Market the region's attractions.	90.5%	19
Other (please specify)	13.0%	4
answered question		21
skipped question		0

12. If you wish, please provide additional feedback regarding goals and objectives for the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for Hardin, Marshall, Poweshiek, and Tama County. If not, please skip this question.

	Response Count
	2
answered question	2
skipped question	19

Page 2, Q1. To keep track of which Regional Development Committee members have provided feedback, what is your name? If you are not a Committee member or wish to remain anonymous, please skip this question.

1	Larry Wolf	Nov 6, 2012 3:34 PM
2	Mike Nuss	Nov 6, 2012 6:22 AM
3	Brandon Shaw	Nov 6, 2012 7:47 AM
4	Dan Zimmerman	Nov 6, 2012 6:48 AM
5	David Worley	Nov 5, 2012 3:30 PM
6	Cindy Litwiler	Nov 5, 2012 2:13 PM
7	Randy Wetmore	Nov 5, 2012 1:55 PM
8	Tina Coleman, RN, BSN	Nov 5, 2012 1:36 PM
9	Heath Kellogg	Nov 5, 2012 1:23 PM
10	Donna Sampson	Nov 5, 2012 1:18 PM
11	Paul Gellenfeldt	Nov 5, 2012 1:12 PM
12	Russ Behrens	Nov 5, 2012 1:05 PM
13	Lyle Brehm	Nov 5, 2012 12:54 PM
14	Charles Smith	Nov 5, 2012 7:54 AM
15	Monica Chavez-Silva	Nov 5, 2012 7:48 AM
16	Richard Stone	Nov 5, 2012 6:44 AM
17	Jason Staker	Nov 5, 2012 6:42 AM
18	Committee Member Choosing to be anonymous	Nov 1, 2012 3:57 PM
19	Terence Blain, Montezuma	Nov 1, 2012 9:40 AM
20	Deb Crosser	Nov 1, 2012 9:39 AM

Page 3, Q2. Please provide feedback on goal one.

Goal 1 - Retain and increase quality jobs in the region by strengthening existing industries; promoting targeted industries; strengthening and supporting small businesses, locally-owned businesses, and creative entrepreneurs in the region.

Note: Targeted...

1	The targeted industries seem overly broad.	Nov 5, 2012 1:57 PM
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Page 3, Q2. Please provide feedback on goal one.

Goal 1 - Retain and Increase quality jobs in the region by strengthening existing industries; promoting targeted industries; strengthening and supporting small businesses, locally-owned businesses, and creative entrepreneurs in the region.

Note: Targeted...

2	Broad, but appropriate	Nov 5, 2012 7:59 AM
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Page 3, Q3. Please choose appropriate objectives for the goal above. You can choose as many objectives as you deem appropriate and/or provide your thoughts and suggestions.

1	Technical training in High Schools is lacking for manufacturing and construction.	Nov 6, 2012 3:36 PM
2	Some of these goals are duplication of efforts of other agencies. We cannot be an end-all be-all group.	Nov 5, 2012 2:18 PM
3	Change to ensure access to jobs and essential services through transportation alternatives	Nov 5, 2012 1:21 PM
4	I think that local patronage of local businesses is critical, but I don't think a "you should buy local" consumer-targeted advertising will do it. People shop primarily for their own benefit, not for others. I think we need to think about supporting an expanded marketing initiative to make it easier for people to know and shop from, the business in the region (on-line shopping, maybe?) and also encourage business-to-business purchasing with some kind of a program and maybe	Nov 5, 2012 7:59 AM

Page 4, Q4. Please provide feedback on goal two.

Goal 2 - Promote and support healthy lifestyles in the region.

1	I think we should incorporate this to the extent that it SUPPORTS other goals (like making the region an attractive place to live and work) - not as a stand-alone goal on it's own.	Nov 5, 2012 8:01 AM
2	This is important and should be considered in decision making, but should not be a priority as it is a tangent to the pursuits of job creation and retention.	Nov 1, 2012 4:02 PM

Page 4, Q5. Please identify appropriate objectives for the goal above. You can choose as many objectives as you deem appropriate and/or provide your thoughts and suggestions.

1	While we support trail work and etc, this is not a goal for us.	Nov 5, 2012 2:20 PM
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Page 5, Q6. Please provide feedback on goal three.

Goal 3 - Enhance housing quality, affordability, and the overall appearance of the region.

1	Support housing initiatives to provide quality and affordable housing while reducing blighted areas.	Nov 5, 2012 2:22 PM
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Page 5, Q7. Please identify appropriate objectives for the goal above. You can choose as many objectives as you deem appropriate and/or provide your thoughts and suggestions.

1	Homeowner education, credit education	Nov 6, 2012 7:51 AM
2	encourage and support minimum maintenance standards for housing and commercial buildings; reduce or eliminate junk (as well as blight) in the region	Nov 5, 2012 1:24 PM

Page 6, Q8. Please provide feedback on goal four.

Goal 4 - Ensure the consideration of environmental quality, natural disaster resiliency, and overall sustainability in economic development projects.

1	This is really three separate goals. What is the focus?	Nov 6, 2012 7:52 AM
2	We cannot ensure anything along this realm.	Nov 5, 2012 2:25 PM

Page 6, Q9. Please identify appropriate objectives for the goal above. You can choose as many objectives as you deem appropriate and/or provide your thoughts and suggestions.

1	...	Nov 6, 2012 7:52 AM
2	While needed, I view business continuity planning as something different than the above goal.	Nov 5, 2012 2:25 PM
3	Not sure what no. 1 means – ensuring that there is an adequate supply of water for the ED projects or that they are not the kind of project that would require too much water? I think it is a good objective, if perhaps reworded.	Nov 5, 2012 1:27 PM
4	These objectives appear to be restating the goal. Do we need objectives that are more specific? Might be difficult with such a broad goal.	Nov 5, 2012 1:22 PM
5	Figure out a coordinated way to reward best practices for environmental stewardship. Again- we're facing large, out-of-state factory farms popping up that may harm economic development efforts.	Nov 5, 2012 8:25 AM

Page 7, Q10. Please provide feedback on goal five.

Goal 5 - Support and promote the diversity of culture, community, and attractions in the region. Also promote and support cooperation among organizations, cities, and counties in the region to leverage existing knowledge, experiences, and resources.

1	Region 6 has the ability to connect and bring federal resources to the table to promote projects within the 4 counties.	Nov 1, 2012 4:04 PM
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Page 7, Q11. Please identify appropriate objectives for the goal above. You can choose as many objectives as you deem appropriate and/or provide your thoughts and suggestions.

1	provide pre- planning for the communities that are affected by the new cultures in their populations, so that issues such as effective communication, means of meeting basic needs, health care, etc are thought through in advance instead of crisis mode.	Nov 5, 2012 1:40 PM
2	Provide a clearinghouse or database of knowledge and resources that can be shared among organizations?	Nov 5, 2012 1:28 PM
3	I think that in working toward the second goal, we'll inherently address the first goal.	Nov 5, 2012 8:26 AM
4	Change the mindset to one of expecting those companies/businesses who hire immigrants to assist with educating them, eg. learning english, etc. so the burden of those newly coming to the community have a better chance to succeed in our schools ultimately helping the community.	Nov 1, 2012 10:09 AM

Page 8, Q12. If you wish, please provide additional feedback regarding goals and objectives for the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for Hardin, Marshall, Poweshiek, and Tama County. If not, please skip this question.

1	I would like to see Region 6 push for more grants and programs that promote growth rather than "planning" in the region. At some point, we need to move beyond planning and implement. The historical efforts by region 6 have done great things for the area, with the drawback of (earmarks) by the federal government we are limited on the local level. We need region 6 to provide a conduit and identify and support ways to bring in the limited "grant" funds available locally for implementation.	Nov 1, 2012 4:10 PM
2	Access to locally grown/regionally produced food sources, promoting strengths in this area.	Nov 1, 2012 9:44 AM

Survey Two

Region 6 CEDS Goals and Objectives Survey



1. To keep track of which Regional Development Committee members have provided feedback, what is your name? If you are not a Committee member or wish to remain anonymous, please skip this question.





	Response Count
	10
answered question	10
skipped question	2

2. Please choose the projects you believe are appropriate for goal one. Please choose as many or as few projects you believe are necessary to achieve goal one. Goal 1 - Retain and increase quality jobs in the region by strengthening existing industries; promoting targeted industries; strengthening and supporting small businesses, locally-owned businesses, and creative entrepreneurs in the region. Note: Targeted industries identified by the Iowa Economic Development Authority include advanced manufacturing, renewable energy, biosciences, information technology, financial services, and food manufacturing. Objectives include: 1.1 Encourage educational institutions to match education and training opportunities with available jobs. 1.2 Provide information about the assistance-financial, professional development, planning, etc.-available to small, start-up, or expanding businesses. 1.3 Encourage and support professional development and technical skills training programs for youth. 1.4 Provide a well-connected, quality transportation system to ensure the safe and efficient movement of people and goods. 1.5 Provide a quality infrastructure system to ensure businesses and homes have access to water, energy, and information technology that is reliable and safe. 1.6 Increase access to jobs through transportation alternatives. 1.7 Increase community patronage of local businesses.





	Response Percent	Response Count
Provide recommendations for the Customer Workforce Plan developed by the Iowa Workforce Development Region 6 office	50.0%	5
Improve marketing and promotion of available revolving loan funds in the region by developing a clearinghouse for all revolving loan fund information, access current marketing techniques, and identify improvements.	70.0%	7
Compile and distribute information about the tax tools and incentives available to cities, counties, and businesses in the region.	60.0%	6
Compile and distribute information about funding opportunities for the cities, counties, and organizations in the region.	50.0%	5
Inventory vocational training and employment opportunity		

programs in the region and work with businesses to determine what additional programs may be needed.		70.0%	7
Encourage organizations associated with the Regional Development Committee to work with a volunteer or intern from the community.		0.0%	0
Identify and work with employers that could benefit from an employee carpool or rideshare-type program.		40.0%	4
A project needs to be added or edited (please specify)			1
answered question			10
skipped question			2



3. Please choose the projects you believe are appropriate for goal two. Please choose as many or as few projects you believe are necessary to achieve goal two. Goal 2 - Promote and support healthy lifestyles in the region. Objectives include: 2.1 Increase access to affordable and healthy food. 2.2 Increase access and support for recreational facilities, indoor or outdoor. 2.3 Provide safe and accessible pedestrian and bicycle facilities. 2.4 Increase access and support for public transit service. 2.5 Provide the basic needs of all generations-young and elderly.

		Response Percent	Response Count
Complete walkability assessment in interested communities in the region.		80.0%	8
Identify need for indoor recreation facilities and related funding opportunities for region.		80.0%	8
Increase marketing of public transit operations in the region.		50.0%	5
Complete a focus group of young professionals in the region to identify their quality of life needs and concerns.		80.0%	8
A project needs to be added or edited (please specify)			2
answered question			10
skipped question			2

4. Please choose the projects you believe are appropriate for goal three. Please choose as many or as few projects you believe are necessary to achieve goal three. Goal 3 - Enhance housing quality and affordability while reducing blight in the region. Objectives include: 3.1 Encourage and support the development of more quality and affordable rental and owner-occupied residential housing stock. 3.2 Encourage and support the development and/or enforcement of minimum maintenance standards for property. 3.3 Encourage and support preservation, rehabilitation, or revitalization of structure, neighborhoods, or other areas. 3.4 Educate current and potential homeowners about the risks and responsibilities of ownership.

		Response Percent	Response Count
Explore the feasibility of a shared housing inspector.		80.0%	8
Assess current marketing and education methods for housing programs and identify needed improvements.		40.0%	4
Identify methods and potential funding to provide finance and general home ownership training for interested residents and participants in housing programs.		50.0%	5
Continue to support housing programs administered by the Region 8 Planning Commission, Mid-Iowa Community Action, and other organizations.		100.0%	10
A project needs to be added or edited (please specify)			0
answered question			10
skipped question			2

5. Please choose the projects you believe are appropriate for goal four. Please choose as many or as few projects you believe are necessary to achieve goal four. Goal 4 - Consider environmental quality, natural disaster resiliency, and overall sustainability in economic development projects in the region. Objectives include: 4.1 Consider water quality and availability in economic development projects. 4.2 Encourage the incorporate of planning and safeguards to achieve disaster resiliency. 4.3 Encourage sustainability of operations in organizations, businesses, and local government.

		Response Percent	Response Count
Complete annual reviews and/or update of hazard mitigation plans for counties.		77.8%	7
Complete energy audits of municipal operations in interested communities.		77.8%	7
A project needs to be added or edited (please specify)			1
answered question			8
skipped question			3

6. Please choose the projects you believe are appropriate for goal five. Please choose as many or as few projects you believe are necessary to achieve goal five. Goal 5 - Support and promote the diversity of culture, community, and attractions in the region. Also promote and support cooperation among organizations, cities, and counties in the region to leverage existing knowledge, experiences, and resources. Objectives include: 5.1 Increase the amount of knowledge and skills shared among organization, cities, and counties in the region. 5.2 Market the region's attractions.

	Response Percent	Response Count
Inventory regional amenities and create regional promotion materials.	77.8%	7
Identify and connect groups and individuals in the region that may benefit from information sharing meetings, e.g. city clerks, public works directors, mayors, etc.	66.7%	6
Collaborate training opportunities at the regional level, e.g. zoning, using TIF districts, local official training, etc.	44.4%	4
A project needs to be added or edited (please specify)		1
	answered question	8
	skipped question	3

7. If you wish, please provide additional feedback regarding goals, objectives, and projects for the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for Hardin, Marshall, Poweshiek, and Tama County. If not, please skip this question.

	Response Count
	2
answered question	2
skipped question	10

Page 2, Q1. To keep track of which Regional Development Committee members have provided feedback, what is your name? If you are not a Committee member or wish to remain anonymous, please skip this question.

1	Jody Anderson City of Iowa Falls	Nov 29, 2012 2:17 PM
2	Richard Stone	Nov 29, 2012 12:35 PM
3	Jason Staker	Nov 29, 2012 8:10 AM
4	Dan Zimmerman	Nov 27, 2012 8:03 AM
5	Charlie Smith	Nov 27, 2012 6:46 AM
6	Wetmore	Nov 26, 2012 1:46 PM
7	Paul Gellenfeldt	Nov 26, 2012 1:19 PM
8	Mike Nuss	Nov 26, 2012 12:27 PM
9	Lyle Brehm	Nov 26, 2012 12:20 PM
10	Donna Sampson	Nov 26, 2012 11:10 AM

Page 3, Q2. Please choose the projects you believe are appropriate for goal one. Please choose as many or as few projects you believe are necessary to achieve goal one.

Goal 1 - Retain and increase quality jobs in the region by strengthening existing industries; promoting targeted industries; strengthenin...

1	I would remove all objectives except 1.4 and 1.6 - it is duplication of services currently being done by those specific organizations.	Nov 28, 2012 2:43 PM
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Page 4, Q3. Please choose the projects you believe are appropriate for goal two. Please choose as many or as few projects you believe are necessary to achieve goal two.

Goal 2 - Promote and support healthy lifestyles in the region.

Objectives include:

2.1 Increase access to affordable and healthy food...

1	do you have the funding to 'provide' 2.3 and 2.5?	Nov 28, 2012 2:43 PM
2	A project needs to be identified that will help increase access to healthy food and support locally grown food and other products.	Nov 26, 2012 11:16 AM

Page 6, Q5. Please choose the projects you believe are appropriate for goal four. Please choose as many or as few projects you believe are necessary to achieve goal four.

Goal 4 - Consider environmental quality, natural disaster resiliency, and overall sustainability in economic development projects in th...

1	remove 4.1	Nov 28, 2012 2:46 PM
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Page 6, Q5. Please choose the projects you believe are appropriate for goal four. Please choose as many or as few projects you believe are necessary to achieve goal four.

Goal 4 - Consider environmental quality, natural disaster resiliency, and overall sustainability in economic development projects in th...

Page 7, Q6. Please choose the projects you believe are appropriate for goal five. Please choose as many or as few projects you believe are necessary to achieve goal five.

Goal 5 - Support and promote the diversity of culture, community, and attractions in the region. Also promote and support cooperation a...

1	duplication of efforts with Iowa league of cities	Nov 28, 2012 2:48 PM
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Page 8, Q7. If you wish, please provide additional feedback regarding goals, objectives, and projects for the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for Hardin, Marshall, Poweshiek, and Tama County. If not, please skip this question.

1	While there are some things in this proposal that are appropriate, a lot of the tasks are duplication of current services already in place.	Nov 28, 2012 2:48 PM
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2	Have we considered how many of these goals and objectives would be duplication of other groups efforts already in place, IE: meetings of city clerks, city officials already provided by League of municipalities. Work with community colleges and identifying needed skills is already being done through economic development groups. Tax incentives and TIF usage is provided through IEDA. Can we minimize some of these efforts to avoid duplication of other programs.	Nov 26, 2012 12:30 PM
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Economic Development Planning in Region 6

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Progress Report

Board Meeting
October 29, 2012

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy: The Basics

- Main purpose is to identify economic opportunities, goals, projects and an action plan to complete projects in the region
- Strategy development is funded by Economic Development Administration (EDA)
- EDA approved strategy qualifies region to apply for applicable funding

New Approach: Regional Development Initiative

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Regional Development Initiative

The primary goal of the Regional Development Initiative is comprehensive, coordinated, and continued development and implementation of regional plans and planning efforts in the Region 6 area including:

- Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
- Long Range Transportation Plan
- Public Input
- Ad hoc regional projects

This initiative is guided by the Region 6 Planning Commission, a diverse group of professionals, community leaders, and business owners from across the region. Membership fulfills the federal requirement for a comprehensive and coordinated approach to the development of an (E)DA approved economic development strategy as a majority of the members are located in the region.

The Initiative and Committee are a long-term effort supported by the Region 6 Planning Commission. For more information and continued updates on the Regional Development Initiative and the Committee's activities, regularly visit this webpage. Information and materials are made available to Committee members and the public alike to ensure that everyone has access to information. If you would like even more information, please contact Alicia Priebe at apriebe@region6planning.org or (841) 751-0327.

Announcements

October 10, 2012 - The first Regional Development Committee meeting will be held at 2 PM in the Marshalltown Public Library. This meeting is open to all Committee members and the public. Meeting activities include a SWOT analysis for the region and brainstorming economic development strategy goals. The information packet for this meeting is available for download! Just scroll down to the last section of this webpage.

...comprehensive, coordinated, and continued development and implementation of regional plans and planning efforts...

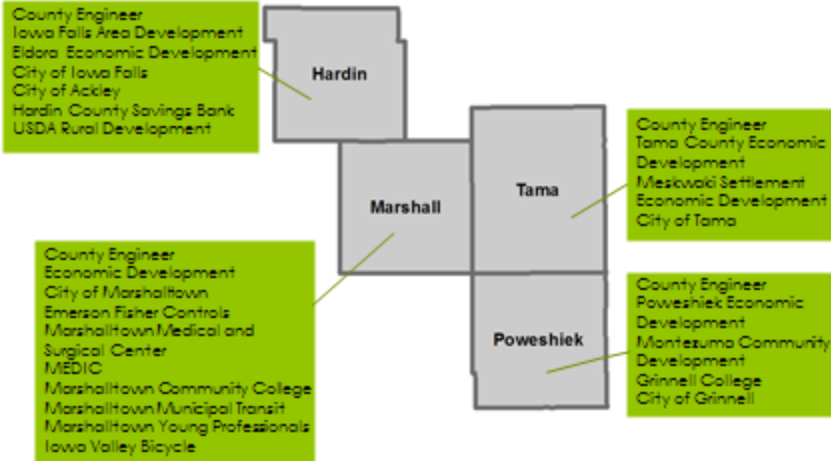
The purpose of a comprehensive economic development strategy (CEDS) for a region is to assess current conditions and determine how the region's economy can be strengthened and expanded in the future.

Goals, objectives, and supporting projects will be developed by a Regional Development Committee and any members of the public who choose to participate in the development process. This economic strategy will be prepared in accordance with guidance provided by the Economic Development Administration.

Regional Development Committee

- Long-term, multi-disciplinary, region wide committee
- Guides development of region wide plans including CEDS, Long-Range Transportation Plan, and ad-hoc planning efforts, e.g. community survey
- Build ownership and likelihood of plan implementation

Committee Membership



Committee Meetings

#1 October 4, 2012
Marshalltown Public Library

Completed Activities

1. County SWOT Analysis
2. Region SWOT Analysis
3. Goals Brainstorming

#2 November 7, 2012
Fisher Community Center

Planned Activities

1. Finalize goals and objectives
2. Brainstorm projects
3. Discuss prioritization and performance indicators

Strategy Development Progress

Ongoing Activities

- County, city, economic development meetings and summary
- Region background research and analysis
- SWOT Analysis summary
- Finalize goals and objectives
- Committee meeting preparation
- Initial Strategy writing

Upcoming Activities

- Second Committee meeting
- Identify projects and action plan
- Strategy writing
- 30-day comment period
- Submission to EDA by December 31

Questions or Comments



Contact Information

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Economic Development Planning in Region 6

Comprehensive Economic
Development Strategy
Progress Report

Board Meeting
December 10, 2012

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy: The Basics

- Main purpose is to identify economic opportunities, goals, projects and an action plan to complete projects in the region
- Strategy development is funded by Economic Development Administration (EDA)
- EDA approved strategy qualifies region to apply for applicable funding

Goals and Project Identification with Committee

- SWOT Analysis
 - Strengths
 - Weaknesses
 - Opportunities
 - Threats
- Brainstorm goals and objectives then finalize
- Brainstorm projects to achieve goals then finalize

SWOT Analysis





SWOT analysis at Regional Development Committee meeting
October 10, 2012

Region 6 SWOT

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban-rural diversity • Major travel routes • Post-secondary education opportunities • Industrial growth • Strong leadership • Sense of community and identity • "Can do!" attitude • Public-private partnerships • Public transit • Workforce that is ready to work • Right infrastructure • Service learning programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of specific skilled labor • Issues with willingness to work • Lack of youth employment opportunities • Lack of soft skills • Lack of retail options • Broadband issues • Aging water and transportation infrastructure • Lack of affordable quality housing • Shortage of healthcare providers • Issues with elected officials not understanding all municipal functions
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industrial growth • Matching job training with job availability • Energy production • Recreation facilities • Childcare • Affordable quality housing • Local food system development • Healthy lifestyle promotion • Overcoming cost of rail infrastructure projects • Right • Senior service provision • Recycling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brain Drain • Air and water quality issues • Natural disasters • Reduction of federal and state funds • Water availability for industrial use • Healthcare reimbursement • Increased poverty, e.g. increase in free or reduced cost lunch in schools

CEDS Goals

Goal One

Retain and increase quality jobs in the region by strengthening existing industries; promoting targeted industries; and strengthening and supporting small businesses, locally-owned businesses, and creative entrepreneurs in the region.

Targeted industries identified by the Iowa Economic Development Authority include advanced manufacturing, renewable energy, biosciences, information technology, financial services, and food manufacturing.

CEDS Projects

Goal One

- o Assist with Customer Workforce Plan recommendations being developed by the Iowa Workforce Development Region 6 office.
- o Improve marketing and promotion of the available revolving loan funds in the region by developing a clearinghouse for all revolving loan fund information, assess current marketing techniques, and identify improvements.
- o Compile information about the tax tools and incentives available to cities, counties, and businesses in the region.
- o Compile and distribute information about funding opportunities for cities, counties, and organizations in the region.
- o Inventory vocational training and employment opportunity programs in the region and work with businesses to determine what additional programs may be needed.
- o Pursue transportation system improvement funds
- o Identify and work with employers that could benefit from an employee carpool or rideshare-type program.

CEDS Goals

Goal Two

Promote and support healthy lifestyles in the region.

CEDS Projects

Goal Two

- Complete assessment of access to affordable and healthy food in interested communities.
- Complete walkability and bikeability assessment in interested communities.
- Create a team for improving healthy lifestyles on a county wide basis.
- Identify the need for indoor recreation facilities and related funding opportunities for the region.
- Increase marketing of public transit options in the region.
- Complete a focus group of young professionals in the region to identify their quality of life needs and concerns.

CEDS Goals

Goal Three

Enhance housing quality and affordability while reducing blight in the region.

CEDS Projects

Goal Three

- **Explore the feasibility of a shared housing inspector for the region.**
- Assess current marketing and education methods for housing programs and identify needed improvements.
- **Identify methods and potential funding to provide finance and general home ownership training for interested residents and participants in housing programs.**
- Continue to support the housing programs administered by the Region 6 Planning Commission, Mid-Iowa Community Action, and other organizations.

CEDS Goals

Goal Four

Consider environmental quality, natural disaster resiliency, and overall sustainability in economic development projects in the region.

CEDS Projects

Goal Four

- Complete annual reviews or updates of hazard mitigation plans for cities and counties.
- **Create teams to improve sustainability efforts for the public and private sectors.**
- Complete energy audits of municipal operations in interested communities.

CEDS Goals

Goal Five

Support and promote the diversity in culture, community, and attractions in the region. Also promote and support cooperation among organizations, cities, and counties in the region to leverage existing knowledge, experience, and resources.

CEDS Projects

Goal Five

- Inventory regional amenities and create regional promotion materials.
- Identify and connect groups and individuals in the region that may benefit from information sharing meetings, e.g. city clerks, public works directors, mayors, etc.
- Collaborate training opportunities at the regional level, e.g. zoning, using TIF districts, local official training, etc.

Finalizing the CEDS

- Draft complete for a 30-day public comment period beginning December 1st and ending December 31st
- Continue to review and enhance draft to meet standards and requirements
- Comments will be incorporated as they are received
- Final CEDS will be submitted to EDA for approval on December 31st

Questions or Comments



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