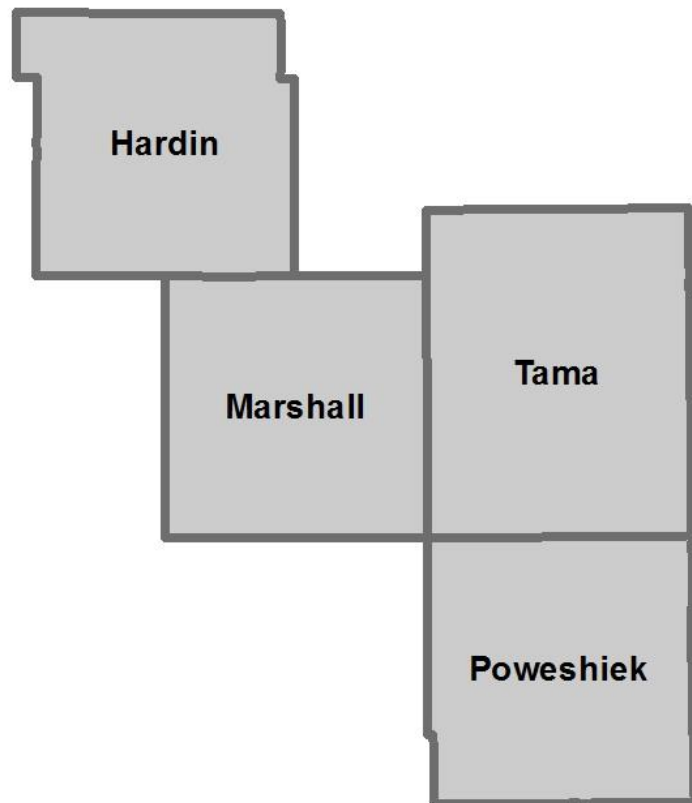


REGION 6 COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY:

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

2018 - 2023



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 2017, approved by the Region 6 Board of Directors on May 10, 2018, and submitted to the Economic Development Administration for approval immediately thereafter. 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

Cindy Schulte, Iowa Valley Community College District

This Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy was approved by the Region 6 Planning Commission Board of Directors, referred to as the Board, in May 2018 after review and consideration of the Strategy. See resolution provided on the right.

Board membership at the time of Strategy approval is provided below.

Resolution Approving the Strategy

May 10, 2018

Region 6 Planning Commission Board of Directors

Jody Anderson, Chair, Iowa Falls City Manager

*Mark Schoborg, Vice-Chair, Retired Engineer from Central Iowa
Water Association*

*Dave Thompson, Secretary-Treasurer, Marshall County Supervisor
and Thompson's True Value*

Dan Agnew, Mayor of Grinnell

Kendall Jordan, Tama County Supervisor

Roger Luehring, Gladbrook and CGA Consultants

*Michelle Spohnheimer, Housing & Community Development
Director, City of Marshalltown*

Cindy Litwiller, Iowa Falls Area Development

Larry Wilson, Poweshiek County Supervisor

Lance Granzow, Hardin County Supervisor

Trudi Scott, City of Gladbrook

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, 2017).

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, Peoplerides, 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

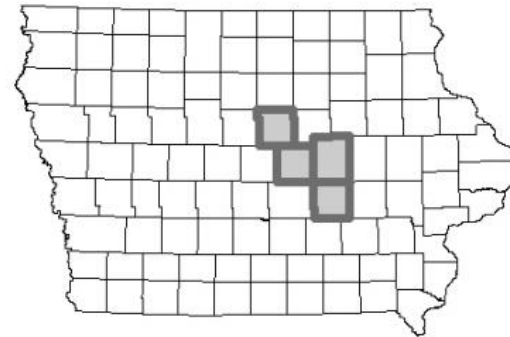
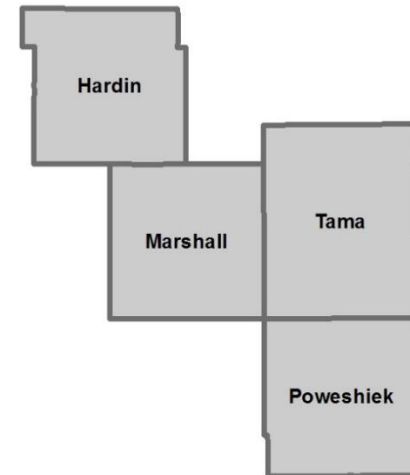


Figure 2: Region 6 Economic Development District



(Iowa Workforce Development Region 6, 2017)

Figure 3: Region 6 Cities

THE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE AND STRATEGY 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. Early in 2017 Region 6 executive director Martin Wymore had multiple interviews and meetings with county engineers, city staff, and economic development professionals to identify current needs, progress being in existing projects, and local plans for the future. Results of those interviews can be found in Appendix A

*Table 2: Strategy Committee Members and Affiliation**

Name	Position	Affiliation	Type
Kendall Jordan	Board of Supervisors	Tama County	Public
Lance Granzow	Board of Supervisors	Hardin County	Public
Larry Wilson	Board of Supervisors	Poweshiek County	Public
Jody Anderson	City of Iowa Falls	City of Iowa Falls	Public
Michelle Spohnheimer	City of Marshalltown	City of Marshalltown	Public
Dan Agnew	City of Grinnell	City of Grinnell	Public
Trudi Scott	City of Gladbrook	City Gladbrook	Public
Mark Schoborg	Self Employed	Self Employed	Private
Dave Thompson	Thompson True Value / Board of Supervisors	Marshall County	Private & Public
Roger Luehring	Clapsaddle-Garber Associates	Clapsaddle Garber & Associates	Private
Cindy Schulte	Iowa Valley Community College	Iowa Valley Community College	Private
Cindy Litwiller	Iowa Falls Area Development	Economic Development Group	Private

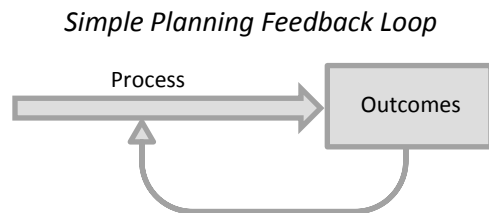
*The Strategy Committee membership is up-to-date as of May 2, 2018.

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**

COMMENT PERIOD AND SUBMISSION FOR APPROVAL

This strategy was released for a 30-day public comment period on March 28, 2018. The Region 6 Planning Board of Directors held a hearing on the document on April 30, 2018. The document will be submitted to the Economic Development Administration May 10, 2018. A public hearing notice was sent to the Marshalltown Times

Republican. Meeting agendas are sent to all area newspapers and radio stations. See public hearing notice in Appendix C.

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.

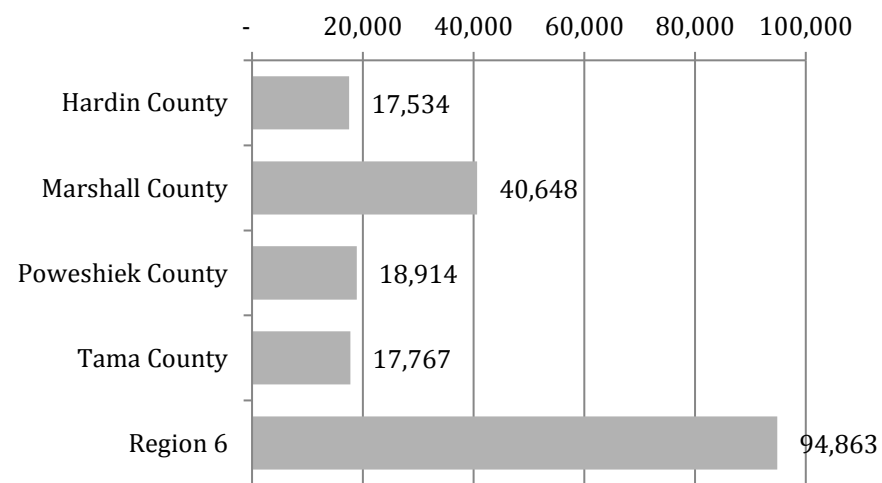
Data sources include the United States Census Bureau, State Data Center of Iowa, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Iowa State Historical Society, Iowa Workforce Development, Iowa State University, past plans developed for Region 6, and others. For easy reference, the important considerations, which are the 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.

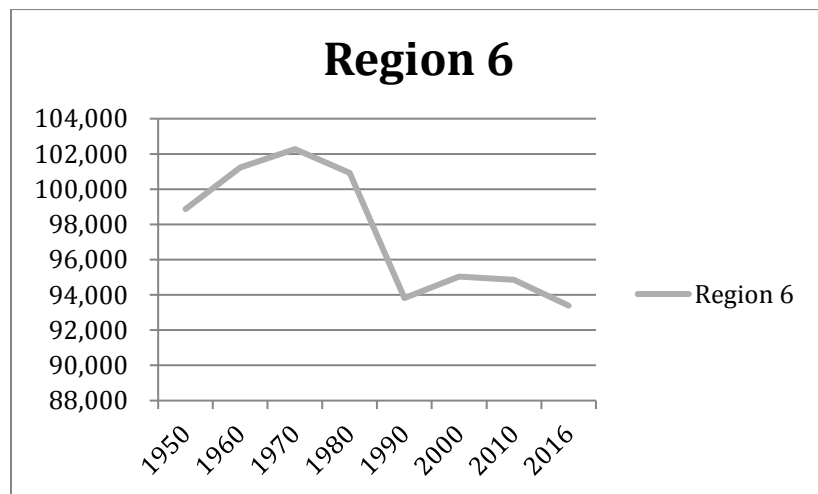
Figure 4: 2010 U.S. Census Population in Region 6



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.

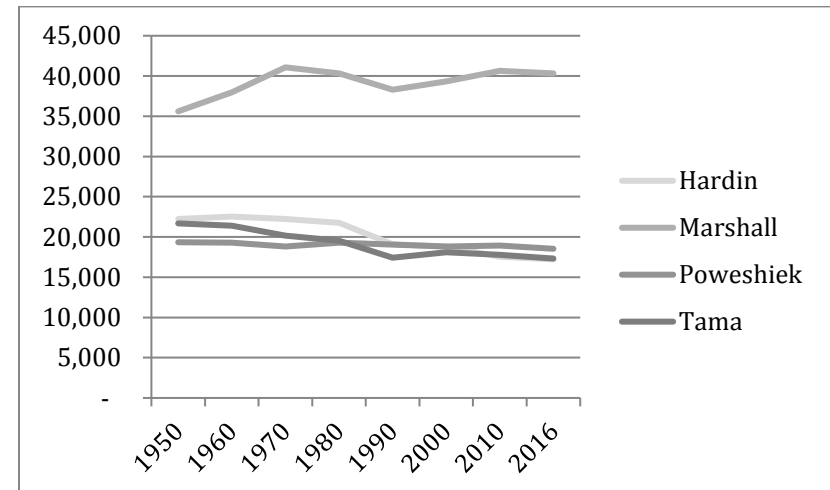
Figure 5: Region 6 Population 1950 – 2016



Data Source: State Data Center of Iowa, September 2017

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 – 2016



Data Source: State Data Center of Iowa, September 2017

The fluctuation in Marshall County’s population is due primarily to any major changes in Marshalltown’s population—at just over 27,000. The second largest city in Marshall County is State Center with a 2016 population of 1,452. All other cities in the county have a population less than 1,000 so it is not surprising that overall population levels in Marshall County mirror changes in the City of 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 2016 population of 9,151. 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 2016 population of 5,128; 2,661; and 1,546, 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 2016 population of 1,657 and 1,355, 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.

Because estimated Census data is not always accurate we have left the 2000-2010 chart in place however narrative reflects current estimates. Recent estimated census data shows an overall population decrease in the Region 6 population between 2010 and 2016. The decrease is .8%. Marshall County experienced the least amount of decrease of .8%. In absolute numbers and compared percentage, Hardin County accounts for the majority of population

loss in the region with a .8% or a loss of 717. Tama County lost the most population with a decrease of 448 people. See Table 4A.

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

Table 4A: Population Change 2010 – 2016

	2010	2016	Change
Hardin County	17,534	17,226	-1.8%
Marshall County	40,648	40,312	-.8%
Poweshiek County	18,914	18,533	-2%
Tama County	17,767	17,319	-2.5%
Region 6	94,362	93,645	-.8%

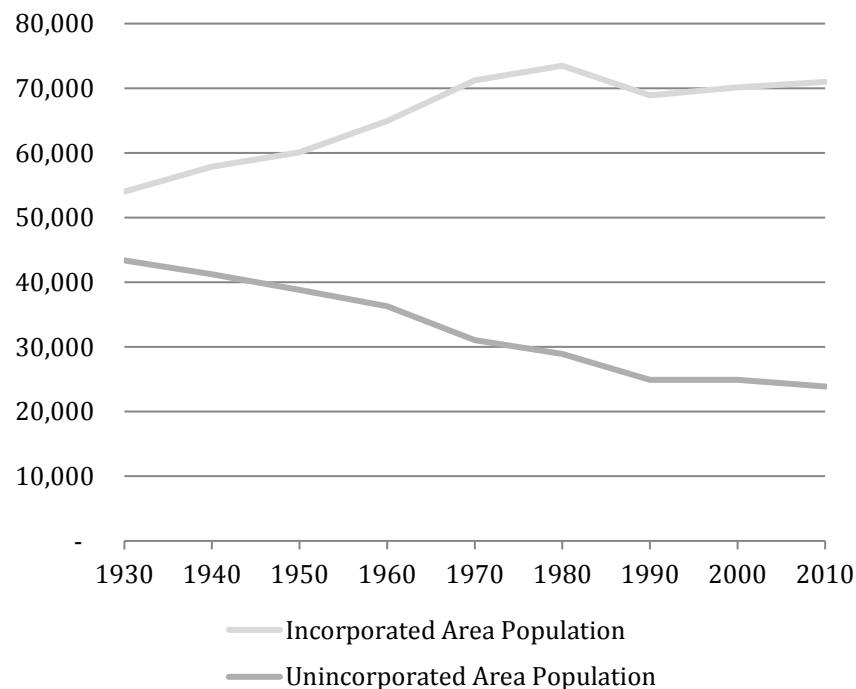
Data Source: (State Data Center of Iowa, 2012)

In the same period, Iowa's total population increased about 3% 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).

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 38.9 to 44.7. Marshall County has the youngest median age, and Hardin County has the oldest median age. Refer to Table 6.

Table 6: Median Age in 2010 and 2015

	2010	2015
Hardin	43.7	44.7
Marshall	39.6	38.9
Poweshiek	41	40.9
Tama	41.8	43.0
Iowa	38.1	41.9

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017

Over the most recent decade, all region 6 counties experienced a small increase in the median age of the population. Hardin County has the highest median age; however, Tama County increased the most of all counties by 1.2 years. Both Marshall County and

Poweshiek County experienced a decrease in age .7yrs & .1yrs respectively

Another indicator of an aging population is the percentage of the population that is aged 65 and over. Each county experienced a small amount of gain. Marshall County has the lowest percentage of population over the age of 65 both in 2010 and 2015.

Hardin County had the highest percentage of population over the age of 65 however from 2010 to 2015 Hardin County had the lowest amount of growth in the percentage of population over the age of 65. Refer to table 7 for more information.

Table 7: Percentage Aged 65 and Over in 2010 and 2015

	2010	2015
Hardin	21.0%	21.2%
Marshall	16.4%	18.1%
Poweshiek	18.4%	20.2%
Tama	18.4%	19.6%
Iowa	14.9%	16.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017

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, 2017).

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

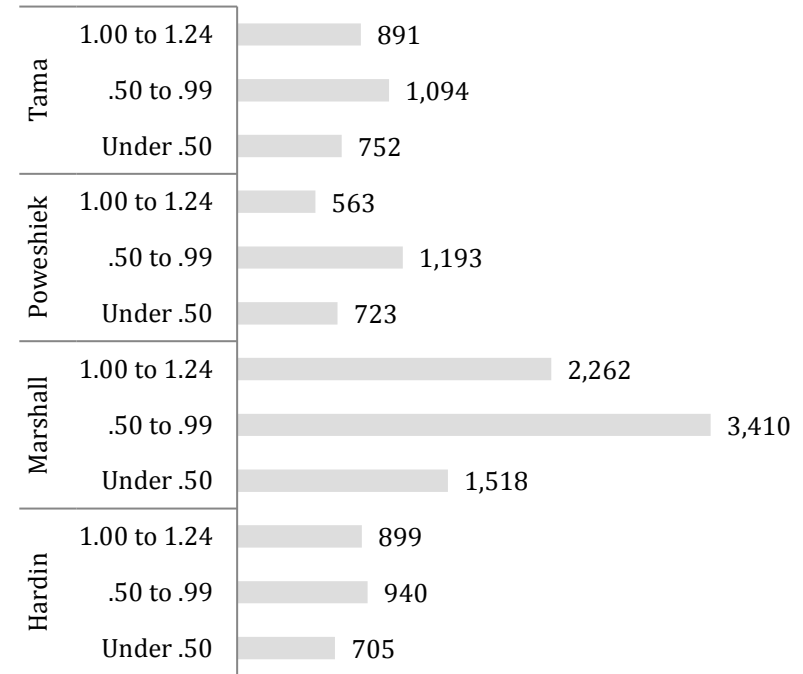
One way of determining the extent of poverty in Region 6 is analyzing the ratio of income to poverty level. This indicator specifically identifies how income compares to the set poverty level for a county. Referring to Figure 8, an individual with income that is half of the income set as the level of 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 41,236 workers in 2016. The majority of jobs in the region were in Marshall County. Nearly 18,000 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 2016*

County	Number Employed
Hardin	7,274
Marshall	18,230
Poweshiek	10,021
Tama	5,711

Note: The sum of number employed for each county may not reflect total region employment exactly due to rounding.

Source: (Statistics, County Employment and Wages in Iowa Second Quarter 2016)

Employment by Industry

The largest employment sector in the region is government—including public education and health institutions—with 8,055 workers or 21 percent of the workforce employed. The second largest sector is manufacturing with 7,847 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.

2016 Industry Breakout by Employment

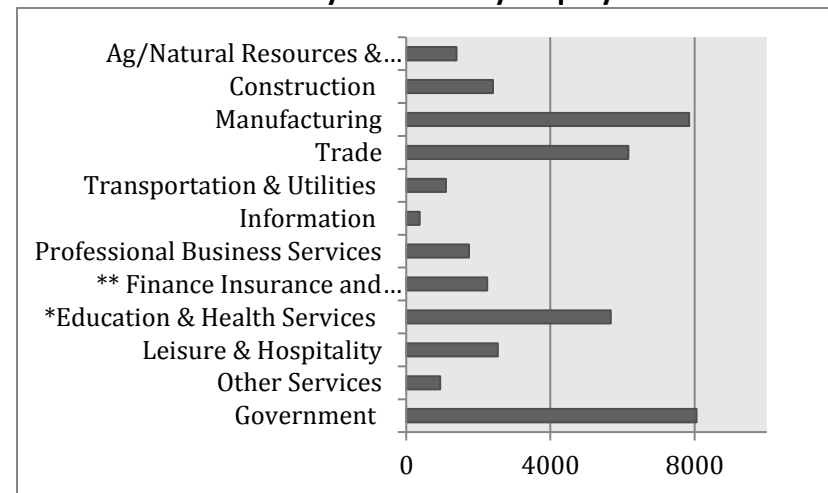


Figure 9: Employment by Industry in Region 6

Note: FIRE: Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate

Source: Iowa Workforce Development, 2017

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, Emerson Process Management, Fisher Controls, JBS, and larger retail stores. See Table 15.

Table 15: Ten Major Private Industry Employers

Company	Industry
Unity Point	Health Services
Emerson – Fisher	Manufacturing
Lennox	Manufacturing
Grinnell College	Educational Services
Grinnell Mutual	Finance & Insurance
Hy-Vee	Retail Trade
JBS Swift	Manufacturing
Meskwaki Casino & Hotel	Arts & Entertainment
Iowa Premium	Manufacturing

Source: Iowa Workforce Development, 2017

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. The most notable increases are the construction and the agriculture, natural resources, and mining sector with a 12.16% and 5.91% 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. See Table 16.

Table 16: Employment by Industry in Region 6

Industry	2013	2014	% Change
<i>All Industries</i>	40,421	40,487	.16
<i>Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Mining</i>	1320	1,398	5.91
<i>Construction</i>	2,146	2,407	12.16
<i>Manufacturing</i>	7,995	7,847	-1.85
<i>Trade</i>	6,092	6,163	1.17
<i>Transportation and Utilities</i>	1,101	1,100	-0.09
<i>Information</i>	390	372	-4.62
<i>Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate</i>	1,712	1,743	1.81
<i>Professional and Business Services</i>	2,379	2,247	-5.55
<i>Education and Health Services</i>	5,602	5,671	1.23
<i>Leisure and Hospitality</i>	2,546	2,543	-0.12
<i>Other Services</i>	975	942	-3.38
<i>Government</i>	8,163	8,055	-1.32

Source: Iowa Workforce Development, 2017

For the approximately 40,000 jobs in the region in 2014, these jobs were supported by 2,795 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, 2017). 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 2016, there were 569 trade worksites. The professional and business services sector and the construction sector have the second and third highest number of worksites in the region, 301 and 283, 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 2016

Industry	Number of Worksites
----------	---------------------

<i>Trade</i>	549
<i>Professional and Business Services</i>	301
<i>Construction</i>	283
<i>Government</i>	266
<i>Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate</i>	253
<i>Education and Health Services</i>	288
<i>Leisure and Hospitality</i>	222
<i>Other Services</i>	210
<i>Manufacturing</i>	120
<i>Transportation</i>	130
<i>Natural Resources</i>	141
<i>Information</i>	47

Source: Iowa Workforce Development, 2017

The industry sector with the smallest number of worksites in the region is the information sector with a total 47 worksites. The industry sector with the next lowest number of worksites, the natural resources sector, however the natural resources sector has nearly three times the number of worksites than the information sector with 141 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).

Focusing on average annual salary, the construction, transportation and finance industries had the highest average wages respectively in the region in 2016. The industry sector with the lowest average annual salary is the leisure and hospitality sector with an average of \$12,087 per year. See Table 18.

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

Industry	2015	2016	% Change
All Industries	\$40,125	\$41,206	2.69%
Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Mining	\$45,402	\$45,810	0.90%
Construction	\$52,629	\$60,126	14.24%
Manufacturing	\$50,484	\$52,136	3.27%
Trade	\$32,829	\$32,698	-.40%
Transportation and Utilities	\$53,893	\$56,754	5.31%
Information	\$35,870	\$36,705	2.33%
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	\$54,117	\$56,186	3.82%
Professional and Business Services	\$37,765	\$37,085	-1.8%
Education and Health Services	\$39,790	\$39,134	-1.65%
Leisure and Hospitality	\$11,445	\$12,087	5.61%
Other Services	\$26,742	\$27,609	3.24%
Government	\$38,157	\$38,846	1.80%

*Dollars/Year

Source: Iowa Workforce Development, 2017

There were modest salary increases in all industry sectors in the region from 2015 to 2016 except in the trade sector and professional and business services sector. The average annual salary in the professional business sector decreased 1.8 percent or \$680 per year a small but notable decrease. The decrease in the professional and businesses services was smaller at less .4% or about \$131 per year; however, when you factor in cost of living increases, any reduction forces employees in these sectors to cut their spending. See Table 18.

UNEMPLOYMENT

Total Unemployment

Recent unemployment data for counties in Region 6 indicate that unemployment ranges from as low as 3.5 in Poweshiek County and as high as 4.9 in Marshall County in 2016. All four counties had higher unemployment than the State of Iowa. See Table 19.

Table 19: Unemployment Rate by County in 2016

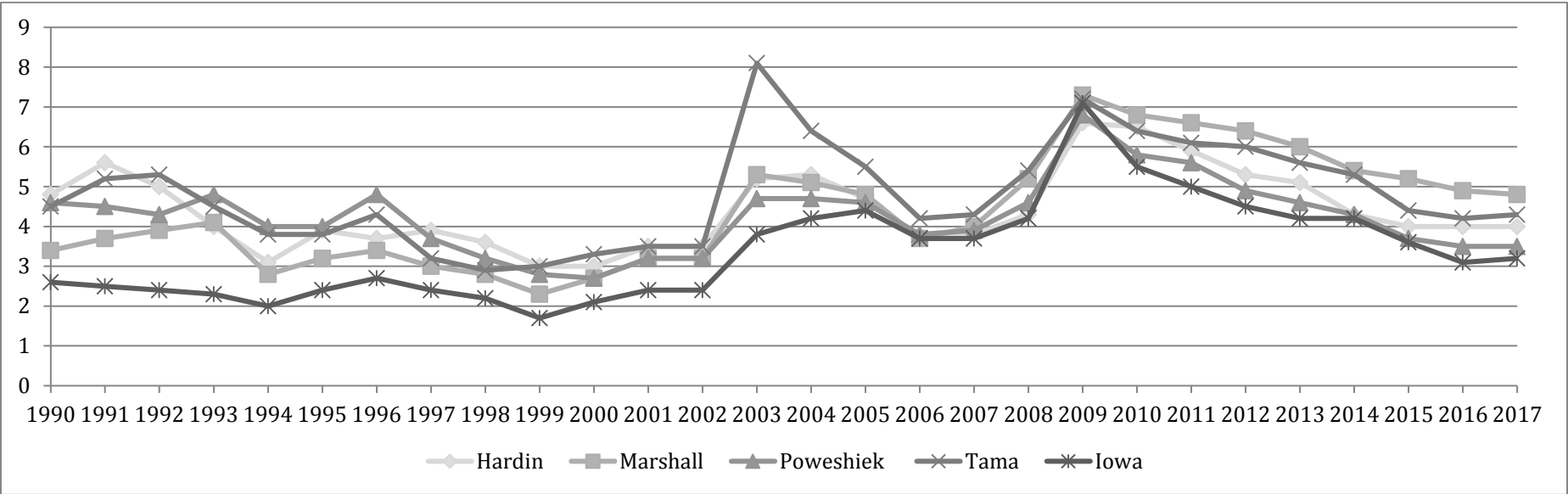
Hardin	4.0
Marshall	4.9
Poweshiek	3.5
Tama	4.2
Iowa	3.1

Note: The 2016 employment rate is based on the average of monthly unemployment rates including July 2017.

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2017

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 trend downward. See Figure 10.

Figure 10: Unemployment Rate by County from 1990 to 2017



Note: The 2017 employment rate is based on the average of monthly unemployment rates including July 2017.

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2017

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 higher 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 in November of 2014 Iowa Premium Beef reopened the animal processing facility with a crew of 100. Today Iowa Premium Beef currently employs 870 people. (Welsh, 2017)

Unemployment by Industry

Looking at more recent employment dynamics, from 2013 to 2014, a total of 66 jobs (.16 percent) were gained in the region. The industry sector with the greatest percentage gain from 2013 to 2014 was Construction with a 12.16 percent increase. This is a gain of 241 jobs in the region; however, other industries such as Professional Business Services incurred a fairly significant decrease of 5.55 percent, thereby offsetting these modest gains. See Table 20 for more information.

Table 20: Employment Gains by Industry: 2013-2014

Industry	2013	2014	% Change
<i>All Industries</i>	40,421	40,487	.16%
<i>Construction</i>	2,146	2,407	12.16%
<i>Ag/Natural Resources& Mining</i>	1,320	1,398	5.91%
<i>Retail Trade</i>	4,348	4,501	3.52%
<i>Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate</i>	1,712	1,743	1.81%
<i>Education & Health Services</i>	5,602	5,671	1.23%
<i>Trade</i>	6,092	6,163	1.17%
<i>Federal Government</i>	315	317	.63%
<i>Private Business</i>	32,258	32,432	.54%

Source: Iowa Workforce Development, 2017

The Retail trade sector saw a fairly modest gain of 3.52% (153 jobs) while the Wholesale trade sector saw a significant decrease of 4.59% (80 jobs) leaving the trade industry as a whole with a modest 1.17% gain. The largest percentage of decrease came in the Professional & Business services with a 5.55% decrease (132 jobs). As indicated before the losses and gains overall industries left the region relatively close to being unchanged (Iowa Workforce Development Region 6, 2017).

FUTURE EMPLOYMENT

Growth is projected for several industries in Region 6—over 23 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 are educational services and social assistance, at 23.4 and 23.8, respectively. The industries that are projected to grow the most in terms of total employment include educational services and ambulatory health care services, at 345 and 290, respectively. See Table 21 on the following page.

While overall projected employment growth is being forecast to be lower than what was projected only a few years ago, growth is also being focused on different sectors from those past projections. For example, sectors that were once forecast to be pulling ahead and since have dropped off the top 20 growth sectors list were: fabricated metal manufacturing, professional scientific and technical, hospitals, food and beverage stores, management of companies and enterprises, and insurance carriers and related activities. Some of the job categories that headed the list of top 20 growth sectors in the past have inched their way down. However, it is clear from the general trends identifiable in these projections that services, from health care to administrative and self-employment are taking over manufacturing as key employment activities.



Since the last Economic Development Strategy report in 2013 the region has seen some notable growth in a few areas. Brownells inc. built a 245,000 square foot distribution center with a 7,000 square foot retail store just off Exit 182 of Interstate 80 in Grinnell, Iowa. Brownells was once located in Montezuma, Iowa; however, due to growth the old facility no longer met Brownells' needs. With the addition of the new Grinnell facility, Brownells moved Crow Shooting Supply Company into their old facility in Montezuma. (Brownells)

In November of 2014, Iowa Premium Beef reopened an idle beef processing plant located in Tama, Iowa. Currently Iowa Premium Beef employs 870 full time employees; however, due to the lack housing in the area the majority of those employees commute to Iowa Premium Beef each day. During interviews with local officials one of the main identified needs for the surrounding communities turned out to be an adequate amount of safe clean and affordable housing to meet the growing housing demands of the area. (Welsh, 2017)





In 2016 Alliant Energy began construction on a new natural gas fired electric generation station in Marshalltown, Iowa. During the construction phase of the project, over 800 persons were employed at the site. Nearly \$50 million came into the local community to local vendors and suppliers. The new 650 Mega Watt capacity generation station replaced 14 less efficient smaller generation units. The total investment for the generation station came in at \$645 million representing the largest project investment in Marshall County, Iowa. (Times Republican)

Table 21: Top 20 Growing Industries by Employment in Region 6 (Projected)

Industry	Projected Employment in 2026	Total Growth	% Change
Educational Services	5,415	345	6.8
Ambulatory Health Care Services	1,530	290	23.4
Self-Employment and Unpaid Family Workers	1,445	265	5.9
Administrative Support and Support Services	1,445	240	19.9
Nursing and Residential Care Facilities	2,185	230	11.8
Food Manufacturing	3,300	205	6.6
Specialty Trade Contractors	1,315	160	13.9
Food Services and Drinking Places	2,175	155	7.7
Social Assistance	625	120	23.8
Wood Product Manufacturing	905	120	15.3
Local Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals	3,015	105	3.6
Support Activities for Agriculture	400	95	31.1
Heavy and Civil Engineering Construction	950	80	9.2

Warehousing and Storage	445	80	21.9
Gasoline Stations	950	80	9.2
Truck Transportation	475	55	13.1
Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers	555	50	9.9
General Merchandise Stores	1,010	45	4.7
Religious, Grantmaking, Civic, Professional Organizations	955	35	3.8
Construction of Buildings	415	35	9.2

Note: Projections are based on estimates of employment in 2016.

Source: Iowa Workforce Development, May 1, 2018

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 2015 and 2016. Poweshiek County has similar per capita sales, that is less than 500 dollars fewer than Marshall and Hardin County, but Tama County's per capita sales is significantly lower at \$4,500. There is an approximate \$5,000 difference in per capita sales between Tama County and the remaining Region 6 counties. Refer to Table 22.

Table 22: Estimated Sales per Capita (In Dollars)

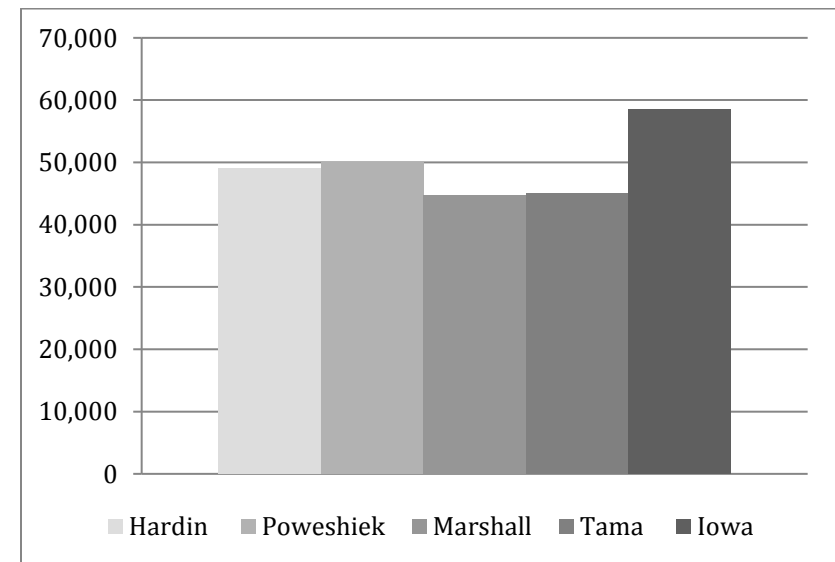
	2015	2016	% Change
Hardin	\$9,406	\$9,430	.3%
Marshall	\$8,894	\$9,412	5.8%
Poweshiek	\$8,853	\$9,030	2.0%
Tama	\$4,523	\$4,500	-.5%

Source: Iowa State University, 2017

Compared to the entire state, the average sales per capita in Region 6 are comparatively low. In fiscal year 2016, the sales per capita were estimated to be \$12,280. Iowa's sales per capita were almost \$3,000 higher than Marshall and Hardin County (Iowa State University Department of Economics, 2017).

Notice that all Region 6 counties experienced an increase in average sales per capita from fiscal year 2015 to 2016. Tama County was the only county that experienced a loss. Marshall and Poweshiek Counties experienced the largest increases of 5.8% & 2.0% respectively. Refer to Table 22.

Median household income may sometimes explain the differences in average sales per capita. While Tama counties sales per capita was much lower than all other counties, the median household income does not reflect a significant difference when compared to other counties. See Figure 11.



Source: Iowa State University, 2017

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 \$45,911. 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 2015 to 2016. The greatest increase in sales leakage occurred in Tama County with a nearly \$3 million increase. Refer to Table 23.

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

	2015	2016
Hardin	-41.9	-43.9
Marshall	-91.3	-75.5
Poweshiek	-56.7	-56.1
Tama	-125.9	-128.6

Source: Iowa State University, 2017

Of all Region 6 counties, Tama County had the largest estimated sales leakage, which was over \$128 million in 2016. Marshall County's estimated retail sales leakage was approximately \$35 million less. The estimated sales leakage in Hardin and Poweshiek

Counties were significantly less with an estimated \$56.1 million and \$43.9 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, 2017). Among Region 6 Counties, Tama County had the highest percentage of workers who commuted to another county for work, over 70 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	53.5%
Marshall	46.3%
Poweshiek	49.1%
Tama	70.3%

Source: Iowa State University, 2017

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, 2017).

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, 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, Hy-Vee, and Menards. Marshalltown has a small shopping mall with smaller retail stores like JC Penny and Hobby Lobby serving as anchor stores. 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.

Downtown Grinnell Iowa



(Region 6 Planning Commission, 2017)

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 operational headquarters for Iowa Select Farms and Seaboard Foods expansive feed mill located in Hardin County where pork production is increasingly concentrated. A new beef processing facility has reopened in Tama County after being closed for more than 10 years - <http://www.iowapremium.com/> . 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).

Three renewable fuels production facilities are located in Hardin County. The two corn facilities include –

- 1). Flint Hills Resources <https://www.fhr.com/> has an ethanol facility in Iowa Falls. The facility currently has a capacity of 102 million gallons.
- 2). Pine Lake Corn Processors has an ethanol refinery North of Steamboat Rock with a capacity of 80 million gallons.

Both of these facilities also produce a by-products that are largely used in livestock feed consumption.

Cargill also operates a 65 million gallon bio-diesel facility at their large Iowa Falls facility. This facility uses soybeans. This facility also produces 65 million gallons of bio-diesel. By-products from this facility are also used for livestock feed operations.

In total, 247 million gallons of renewable fuels are produced in Hardin County and the region. Many trucks, and railroad cars are used to transport materials and end products. The facilities help boost the regional economy.

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. Iowa is recognized as one of the national leaders in wind energy. The region has several large wind farms – at least one in every county.

Moving Wind Turbine Blade through Toledo



Photo Source: Toledo Chronicle, 201



Tradewind Energy is currently constructing two wind turbine projects in Poweshiek County. These wind projects include several wind turbines in fact once completed Poweshiek County will have a total of 170 wind turbines capable of producing up to 340 Mega-Watts of clean renewable wind energy. (Hammond, 2017)



In May of 2017 the Central Iowa Power Cooperative in partnership with Consumers energy of Marshalltown Iowa unveiled the Marshalltown Gateway Centre Solar Array Site. The Marshalltown sites in conjunction with 4 other sites generate a total of 5.5 megawatts. As solar energy technology improves and solar power becomes more cost effective we can expect to see more projects like this (Times Republican).



In the picture above we see Van Wall equipment, a John Deere dealership in Grinnell, Iowa with a bank of Solar Cells that help provide electricity for the dealership. Van Wall handles sales and installation of solar power banks for commercial and agricultural applications. As solar technology continues to evolve and the cost per kilowatt hour continues to go down solar energy is becoming a viable alternative as to other sources of clean sustainable energy.

In addition to wind energy, and solar; the new natural gas fired 650 mega-watt generation station (pictured earlier) located in Marshalltown came online April 1st 2017. Although natural gas is not a renewable fuel, the new facility produces sustainable electric power while emitting a fraction of the air pollutants it's coal fired predecessors emitted thereby improving Iowa's overall air quality.

IMPORTANT ECONOMY AND WORKFORCE CONSIDERATIONS

- ✓ Total employment in Region 6 was nearly 41,236 workers in 2016. Almost half of those 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 an increase in employment, but certain industries increased employment by five percent or more. Most notable are the construction sector and the agriculture, natural resources, and mining sector.
- ✓ The other major industry sector that experienced growth in total employment is the finance sector
- ✓ 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 3.5 in Poweshiek County and as high as 4.9 in Marshall County in 2016. Poweshiek County is the only county in the region with an unemployment rate lower than the state of Iowa.
- ✓ From 2013 to 2014, .16 percent or a total of 66 jobs were gained in the region. The industry sector with the greatest percentage gain from 2013 to 2014 was the Construction industry, and the industry with lowest amount of gain in the region was the Federal Government with a gain of .63% or just 2 jobs.
- ✓ The two industry sectors that are projected to grow the most in terms of percentage include the management of companies & enterprises, and the ambulatory health care 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.

- ✓ 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 \$45,911. 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. Currently Tradewind Energy is working on a substantial wind energy production project in Poweshiek County Iowa.

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 of good quality, safe 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 2011 to 2015 the total number of housing units in Region 6 decreased by -0.30 percent or 123 units, but the total population for the region decreased in the most recent decade. See table 25

Comparing counties in the region, the total housing units in Poweshiek County is the only county in the region that experienced an increase of 1.4%. A 1.4% increase equals 123 housing units in the All other counties experienced a decrease in housing units during the same time period. See table 25 for more detailed information on total housing units per county. (State Data Center of Iowa, 2017).

Table 25: Total Housing Units

	2011	2015	% Change
<i>Hardin</i>	8,224	8,144	-0.98
<i>Marshall</i>	16,831	16,691	-0.84%
<i>Poweshiek</i>	8,949	9,072	1.4%
<i>Tama</i>	7,766	7,740	-0.30%
<i>Region 6</i>	41,770	41,647	-.30%
<i>Iowa</i>	1,336,417	1,380,162	3.17%

Source: State Data Center of Iowa, 2017

Comparing statewide total housing units to Region 6 total housing units, the state outpaced Region 6 by a fairly significant amount

Table 26: Average Household Size of Owner-occupied Units

	2011	2015	% 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

	2011	2015	% Change
<i>Hardin</i>	2.16	2.24	3.6
<i>Marshall</i>	2.36	2.50	5.6
<i>Poweshiek</i>	2.08	2.08	0
<i>Tama</i>	2.35	2.45	4.0
<i>Iowa</i>	2.14	2.19	2.0

Source: State Data Center of Iowa, 2017 (Tables 26 and 27)

The trend in household size in Region 6 and Iowa is overall positive, but the overall change is minimal. 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 2015. Marshall County is the only county in the region with occupancy that exceeds statewide occupancy. Over 91 percent of Marshall County's housing units were occupied compared to 91.4 percent at the state level in 2010. In both 2011 and 2015, 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

	2011	2015
<i>Hardin</i>	88.7	85.2
<i>Marshall</i>	92.3	91.4
<i>Poweshiek</i>	84.4	82.0
<i>Tama</i>	89.5	87.7
<i>Iowa</i>	91.4	91.3

Source: State Data Center of Iowa, 2017

From 2011 to 2015, 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
(2011-2015 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, 2017

*Table 30: Median Year Built for Renter-Occupied Units
(2011-2015 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, 2017

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 less than Iowa.

The least expensive county in Region 6 is Hardin County with an estimated median monthly housing cost less than \$600. Tama County's estimated median cost is \$50 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 (2011-2015 Estimate)

	Estimate	Margin of Error
<i>Hardin</i>	\$600	(+/-) \$26
<i>Marshall</i>	\$725	(+/-) \$20
<i>Poweshiek</i>	\$718	(+/-) \$24
<i>Tama</i>	\$658	(+/-) \$23
<i>Iowa</i>	\$733	(+/-) \$3

Source: State Data Center of Iowa, 2017

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 (2011-2015 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, 2017

Based on housing costs as a percentage of household income, most Region 6 counties are relatively affordable. The 2011 to 2015 estimate of median monthly costs as percent of household income is 21.0 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, 2017).

IMPORTANT HOUSING CONSIDERATIONS

- ✓ From 2011 to 2015 the total number of housing units in Region 6 decreased, this decline in housing units is likely explained by the slight population decline during the same period.
- ✓ 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.
- ✓ While Region 6 experienced a slight decline in housing units during the same period the State of Iowa experienced a 3.17% increase in housing units .
- ✓ All counties except for Poweshiek County experienced a slight decrease in total housing units.
- ✓ 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 2015. Marshall County is the only county in the region with occupancy that exceeds statewide occupancy.
- ✓ From 2011 to 2015, 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 8 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 2011 to 2015.
- ✓ Marshall County had the highest estimated median monthly housing cost and also the highest percentage of household income from 2011 to 2015.
- ✓ Based on housing costs as a percentage of household income, most Region 6 counties are relatively affordable. Marshall & Tama have percentages slightly higher than the state level, and however compared to nationwide level, Iowa and all of 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.

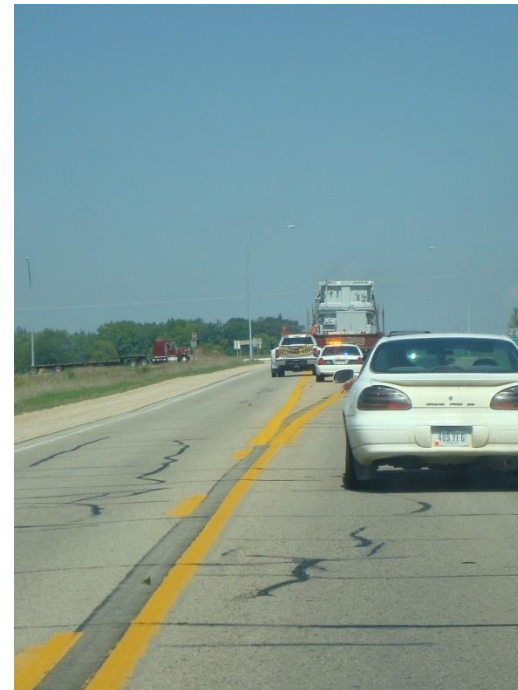
ROAD AND BRIDGE NETWORK

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.

Next year (2018), Highway 30 4-lanes will be graded from the east side of Tama to the Tama/Benton County line. Paving work would start in 2019. Once the 14 miles through Benton County is completed as 4-lane (maybe by early 2020s) Highway 30 will be 4-laned from Boone/Ames to Cedar Rapids area.

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., requires 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 are usually 12 semi-truck loads. Although a permit is required for semi-trucks hauling wind turbine components, the fee is \$10 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 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 Counties, 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.

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 improved 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.

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 lesser since there are considerably less bridges than in 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 further damage and instability of structures.

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.

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, Malcom	Omaha, Chicago	II

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, this rail line is being converted into the Iowa River Trail. See <http://www.iowarivertrail.com/>.

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 Peoplerides (see below). MMT's fixed-route is accessible to persons with ambulatory disabilities but routes do not always provide convenient access to certain locations.

In 2016, a total of 90,353 rides were provided to Marshalltown residents. Currently, the MMT fleet consists of nine buses. The City has replaced most of the heavy duty busses over the last few years. The City's short term bus replacement needs are not significant. The City operates an old 40' heavy duty bus on a special daily run. The City will need to replace this unit with a newer vehicle 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 2017, Peoplerides provided approximately 50,000 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 Vehicle



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 –

- Iowa River Trail: complete the 34 mile recreational trail with about 30 bridges across Hardin and Marshall Counties. The goal is to pave the trail. The estimated cost to complete the project is \$20 million. It will take more than 20 years with current funding sources to complete the project.
- Grinnell Area Recreational Trail: complete gaps in the Grinnell Trail from Stagecoach Road to Industrial Park Road - \$500,000. The City would also like to connect the trail segment from Arbor Lake to 5th Avenue. Estimated cost - \$1 million. The City would also like to connect the current trail to the Jacob Krumm Nature Preserve. This 3 mile connection would cost at least \$1.2 million.
- Iowa Falls Recreational Trail: would like to connect the trail from North Park to Cadet Field. The estimated cost of the remaining work is around \$300,000.

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 2019.
- ✓ 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 crossing 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 Peoplerides. 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

Updated enrollment data is taken from the Iowa Department of Education website, May 1, 2018.

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 had a certified enrollment of 578.2 for the 2017-2018 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 243 student enrollment for the

2017-2018 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 jurisdiction stretches across a county boundary line. This district's offices are located in Conrad which is in the southwest portion of Grundy County. The school buildings are split between the two cities of Union (located in the southeast 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 a total certified enrollment of 565.9 for the 2017-2018 school year.

The Eldora-New Providence Community School District is located in Eldora, 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 a total certified enrollment of 577.2 for the 2017-2018 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 and Hubbard-Radcliffe Elementary School with a total certified student enrollment of 366.3 for the 2017-2018 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, Rock Run Elementary, Riverbend Middle, and Iowa Falls-Alden High School with a total certified enrollment of 1,169 for the 2017-2018 school year. 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 among 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 a total certified student enrollment of 787.3 for the 2017-2018 school year.

The West Marshall Community School District is located in State Center, Iowa, and serves the communities of Clemons, Lamoille, Melbourne, Rhodes, St. Anthony, and State Center, all in Marshall County, Iowa. West Marshall School District is located in the western portion of Marshall County and the center of the state of Iowa. The total certified student enrollment for the school year 2017-2018 was 987.1.

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. Total certified enrollment for this district was 4,959.6 for the 2017-2018 school year.

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 a total certified enrollment of 573.0 for the 2017-2018 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 Bailey Park Elementary School, Davis Elementary School, Fairview Elementary School, the Grinnell Community Middle School, and the Grinnell Community High School. The total certified student enrollment was 1,604.1 for the 2017-2018 school year. The Grinnell-Newburg community school district is the largest in Poweshiek County.

The Montezuma Community School District is located in Montezuma, the county seat of Poweshiek County. Montezuma is located in the south central portion of the county. This district contains the Montezuma Elementary School, Montezuma Junior High School, and Montezuma High School. The total certified student enrollment for the 2017-2018 school year was 472.1. The Montezuma CSD is the smallest school district in Poweshiek County.

Tama County

The North Tama County Community School District is located in Traer, which is in the northeastern portion of Tama County, Iowa. This district contains the Traer Elementary School and North Tama High School, with a total certified student enrollment of 438.6 for the 2017-2018 school year. The elementary school serves kindergarten through 6th grade, and the high school serves grades 7-12 with no separate junior high building. Students are considered to be in junior high in the 7th and 8th grades.

South Tama County Community School District serves the cities of Tama and Toledo. Situated in the south central portion of the county, the district contains the South Tama County Elementary (in Tama), Middle (in Toledo) and High (in Toledo) Schools, with a total certified enrollment of 1,462.0 for the 2017-2018 school year. The South Tama County community school district is the largest of the five in Tama County.

The Gladbrook-Reinbeck Community School District stretches across a county boundary line. This district's offices are located in Reinbeck, which is in the southeastern portion of Grundy County (and is not located in Region 6). There is deep conflict between Gladbrook and Reinbeck. The school board closed the Gladbrook elementary school, which infuriated the community. Reinbeck has a slightly larger population so they have more power. Many of the Gladbrook area students are open enrolling to other nearby districts. The total certified student enrollment for the Gladbrook-Reinbeck Community School District in the 2017-2018 school year was 461.0.

The Union Community District is like the Gladbrook-Reinbeck community school district in that its jurisdiction stretches across a county boundary line and is partially not in Region 6. 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 and La Porte City Elementary School, located in their respective cities. The Union Middle School, is located in Dysart (Tama County), while the Union High School is in La Porte City (Black Hawk County). The total certified enrollment for the 2017-2018 school year was 1,033.7.

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 40 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.

- ✓ 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 position

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.

DISASTER AND ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND RESILIENCY STRATEGY

PRE-DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

Region 6 Planning has historically worked with communities in all four counties to develop Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plans, both to prioritize the likelihood of risk from disasters and to prepare for survival and recovery from potential disaster events. Region 6 will work with communities in the four counties who have developed Hazard Mitigation Plans to review and update the plans as needed. Region 6 will work with communities in the implementation of these plans and assist with funding applications for projects identified in those plans.

MITIGATION AND RESILIENCY PREPAREDNESS

Economic prosperity is linked to a region's ability to prevent, withstand, and quickly recover from major disruptions to its underlying economic base. The CEDS process provides a critical mechanism to help identify regional vulnerabilities and prevent or respond to economic disruptions. Some areas of Region 6 have been heavily impacted by natural disasters caused by severe wind and hail storms and flooding. Other communities have suffered from the economic downturn, particularly the closing of specific employers. Region 6 specifically incorporated hazard mitigation strategies in its 2017 CEDS.

POST-DISASTER PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

REGIONAL RECOVERY GOALS/OBJECTIVES

The main disaster recovery goals for the Region 6 Planning Commission's region are in housing recovery, infrastructure, and hazard mitigation. To address these needs and priorities, a number of projects are already underway and funded as outlined in the Implementation Plan related to the contract's Scope of Work. In addition to the Scope of Work, the following goals and action steps have been or are being undertaken:

GOAL 1 – HOUSING RECOVERY

In the Region 6 Planning Commission area, will assist the county, local communities and individual homeowners to return their structures to pre-disaster condition and prevent damage from future disasters.

Stakeholders: Region 6 Planning Commission; county, communities, and individual homeowners

Timeline: Ongoing, as needed

Objectives:

1. Help homeowners rehabilitate or repair their homes by managing housing rehabilitation and repair programs on behalf of the federal and state government, encouraging homeowners to apply, disburse funds, etc.

2. Administer the Region 6 Housing Trust Fund.
3. Assist communities with the acquisition and buyout process for substantially damaged structures.
4. Apply for housing rehabilitation and repair-related grants on behalf of affected cities.
5. Communicate with cities regularly about housing needs.

GOAL 2 – INFRASTRUCTURE

In the Region 6 Planning Commission area, assist city governments in the mitigation of infrastructure damage and failure due to a disaster.

Stakeholders: Region 6 Planning Commission; county, communities, and individual homeowners

Timeline: Ongoing, as needed

Objectives:

1. Apply for infrastructure and public facility-related grants on behalf of cities and assist with grant administration.
2. Communicate with cities regularly about infrastructure needs.

GOAL 3 – HAZARD MITIGATION

Provide planning assistance to Region 6 Planning Commission counties and cities to minimize future damage from disasters.

Stakeholders: Region 6 Planning Commission; county and cities

Timeline: Ongoing, as needed

Objectives:

1. Facilitate hazard mitigation plan development in Marshall, Tama, Hardin, and Poweshiek Counties.

2. Encourage a regional approach to disaster planning through regularly scheduled meetings for emergency management coordinators to discuss and possibly collaborate on common issues.

IMPLEMENTATION

The following section describes the Region’s actions to fulfill its disaster recovery goals. All actions will be led by Region 6 Planning Commission with critical input from counties, county emergency management, and cities

Timeline: Ongoing

DESIGN DISASTER RECOVERY PLANS

1. Update, implement, and review existing disaster recovery plans

Region 6 has historically completed multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plans for Hardin, Marshall, Poweshiek, and Tama Counties, including the participating communities within the counties. The current status of Hazard Mitigation Plans for the four counties of Region 6 are as follows: Marshall County Plan was approved 9/13/16 and expires 9/13/21; Tama County Plan was approved 10/26/15 and expires 10/26/20; Poweshiek County Plan was approved 2/9/16 and expires 2/9/21; and the Hardin County Plan expired 9/2/16 and an update was in progress as of 1/9/18.

Hazard mitigation planning involves the review and discussion of current disaster recovery strategies and identifying needs and potential projects for the community. During the planning process, Region 6 reviewed existing disaster recovery plans where they existed. Forty-five communities, unincorporated areas, and all school districts within the Region 6 planning area now have FEMA approved hazard mitigation plans. A current, updated hazard mitigation plan affords them to the resources of Region 6 in the creation and implementation of mitigation and recovery plans.

2. Offer disaster recovery or prevention walk-through ‘audits’ to cities/counties to identify and discuss disaster related issues.

Region 6 staff will complete community inventories and needs assessments in communities in the Region 6 planning area. These inventories will cover everything from building code enforcement to backup power for the local warning siren and even the condition of water infrastructure. These inventories will be completed with city staff, officials, and at a broader level during public meetings. The public meetings will be a useful tool in this effort, because residents provide varied perspectives and ideas on disaster-related issues in their communities.

PROVIDE EDUCATION/TRAINING

1. Provide insight to cities/counties about availability of disaster recovery programs, services, and planning tools.

Region 6 publishes and distributes a periodic newsletter and maintains a website—www.region6planning.org—with information that highlights the availability of programs, services, and planning tools. Region 6 also informs communities with known issues if there are available programs, services, or planning tools. In many cases, communities become aware of the assistance we can provide during hazard mitigation meetings. With many communities, we have regular contact whether it is email, phone, or personal meetings, and we make sure to mention programs, services, and planning tools for which they may qualify.

Region 6 will continually look for ways to improve community outreach. In addition to a quarterly newsletter, Region 6 strives to improve communications with the communities we serve. The strategy involves regular visits to communities by staff members rather than visits just when a project is in progress in that particular community. Our strategy also involves improving the distribution of our newsletter and creating simple, usable information sheets that highlight the services we provide.

AFFECTED COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE

1. Provide technical assistance.

Help communities understand programs, communicate information, meet with communities and individual homeowners, prepare grant applications, work with engineers, administer funded projects, and other technical assistance activities as needed.

2. Apply for funding on behalf of affected cities/counties

Region 6 has and will continue to assist with grant application preparation for improvement projects.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOR RECOVERY

1. Identify and implement strategies to address areas of business/industrial impact caused by disaster events and develop strategies to address them.

Region 6 works directly with regional economic development offices to provide the best resources for disaster affected businesses and communities. A major issue in many communities is aging infrastructure, especially wastewater collection systems. Region 6 will continue to apply for funding on behalf of interested communities.

RESOURCES

There have been many types and disaster declaration dates across the region. Historically, the most common events have included flooding, drought, winter storms, and straight line winds. With each disaster event the type and amount of resources differ greatly. The resources differ due to the amount and type of damages, and congressional appropriations that are disaster specific. The region responds to the regional local government needs based upon the

type of resources available. The Iowa Homeland Security & Emergency Management Division, together with FEMA, takes the most consistent federal leadership role in these events.

With the 1993 and 2008 floods, the Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) also took a very strong role due to large supplemental congressional appropriations. Region 6 Planning Commission together with our statewide partners assisted the IEDA with delivering federal supplemental US Department of Housing & Urban Development funds. Funds were available for housing repairs, acquisitions, housing development, mitigating future events, and infrastructure improvements.

The Economic Development Administration, with the 1993 and 2008 floods, also provided some assistance with regional fund coordination and awareness. Supplemental disaster funds were approved so that each region in Iowa could hire a regional staff person to coordinate available resources. These resources helped the region better understand local flooding problems and needs, develop mitigation projects for future events, develop community support for projects, and deliver some of the initial flood coordination services. The region feels that these funds are critical for large future events, especially those with any supplemental congressional appropriations.

Federal Emergency Management Agency has different types of disaster resources available. If the disaster is of sufficient size FEMA will bring in a team of people to provide disaster assistance. This assistance typically includes individual assistance for housing repairs and public assistance for public infrastructure. If the disaster is not of sufficient size this assistance will not be available. Each disaster is different. FEMA also offers disaster mitigation funds. These funds are a percentage of payouts with disasters within the state. FEMA mitigation projects have historically included – property acquisitions and demolitions, flood proofing critical facilities,

sometimes property relocations outside flood hazard areas, and tornado safe rooms.

The amount of local resources and state resources differ with each disaster. Hardin, Marshall, Tama, and Poweshiek County each have a county emergency management coordinator. They do not provide any direct financial assistance to disaster affected areas. They typically take a lead role in the FEMA public assistance with the Iowa Homeland Security & Emergency Management office. They are the front line resources also that assist during the event – coordinating the immediate response to the events. It is important to note that local resources have not been readily available during past resources. Local city and county budgets are tight. When a disaster occurs they still have to operate within those budgets. Federal or state resources are needed to assist.

Region 6 Planning Commission, as the economic development district, responds to disasters. The amount and type of assistance varies with each disaster. With some disasters we provide almost no assistance. With the 1993 and 2008 floods we were actively involved in the response for many years after the events. There are other disasters like the 2010 Eldora Iowa Hail Storm that was not presidentially declared but required some assistance to low income homeowners for this unique event. The 2011 straight line wind event in Tama County also required some assistance with low income homeowners.

Iowa Economic Development Authority may have some assistance for non-congressional supplemental appropriation events. The state sets aside some of the annual Community Development Block

Grant program funds for disaster related activities. These funds must be used to assist low and moderate income people typically. The other federal condition is relieving slum and blight, but that is typically not a disaster related issue. With the low and moderate income standard, the recipients and/or the community must have an income under 80% of the county median as defined by HUD.

US Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration may have funding through the regular budget process for disaster related projects. If there is a disaster related need, Region 6 Planning Commission will review the project with the assigned Economic Development Representative for Iowa.

US Small Business Administration. For some disasters they offer loans for households, non-profits, and businesses. During disasters, FEMA typically has information available for these sources. Again with major disasters Region 6 Planning Commission may hear about these needs and will pass on information.

USDA Rural Development may offer some farm related disaster assistance. Region 6 Planning has had no direct farm involvement in any of the past disasters.

The State of Iowa type and level of assistance has varied with disasters. With some disasters that assistance includes assisting with cleanup. In other disasters the state has provided some gap assistance to homeowners with housing repairs or buyout assistance. That assistance has not been available with every disaster.

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 threats 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

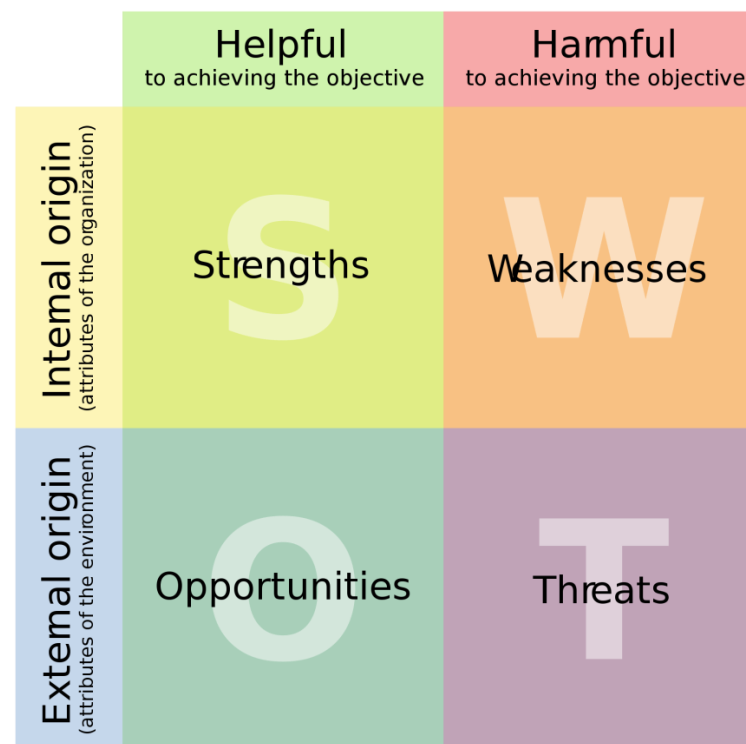


Figure Source: Wikipedia, 2012

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 available labor force ○ Lack of quality affordable housing, especially good rentals. ○ Lack of retail options ○ Old housing stock that needs to be improved ○ Stagnant wages and incomes ○ Aging water and transportation infrastructure ○ Shortage of healthcare providers ○ Lack of child care services
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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. 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.

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. Wastewater 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. Many 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.

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, sewer, 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 PROJECTS AND INVESTMENTS

Region 6 Planning staff visited with most cities, all counties, and places with paid economic development staff across the region in the spring and summer of 2017. The following six questions were reviewed with staff and some elected officials –

1. What are your local needs to help improve the economy?
2. What impediments do local employers have with improving or expanding their business?
3. Are local employers satisfied with the local workforce?
4. Are there properties or conditions that impede local development?
5. What are the top 3 local priorities for the next few years?
6. Public infrastructure condition?

Most of the time the public officials did not provide estimated cost for the projects. Region 6 Planning staff added the very early estimated cost. These costs have not been refined by thorough analysis, so there are known errors in the data. The cost data is based upon nearly 30 years of planning knowledge by Region 6 staff. The data is intended to show the monetary scale of some of the projects.

The top 3 budgetary issues include wastewater and water infrastructure, and issues related to industrial parks. These three

issues have an average cost of about \$25 million. They account for 81% of the proposed projects over the next few years. Road related projects is the fourth biggest one that was mentioned during the reviews. It accounts for 12% of the projects. The other goal projects include housing, public safety, recreation and other. These categories jointly account for about 7% of the future projects.

This list of budgetary future projects should not be aligned to those being the top community priorities, but these are the types of projects that the communities desire to complete in the next 5-years. Most of the wastewater projects need to be completed to meet new Iowa Department of Natural Resources and EPA Clean Water Regulations.

In summary, there is a tremendous need and interest in infrastructure funding. Many of the sewer lines, water lines, and bridges are 100 years old and need to be replaced. Some places need more capacity for infrastructure due to local renewable energy production.

These are some of the projects that will be worked on over the next five years with the CEDS implementation. Certainly, other good projects may arise that need to be completed. All the individual responses, by city and county, are listed in the Appendix. Region 6 staff quantified some of the major issues in the tables that are displayed next.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INVESTMENTS IN REGION 6*

Identified Community Projects:

Goal	County	City	Type of Project	Details	Estimated Cost	Timeline
2	Hardin	Ackley	Wastewater	Wastewater Lining & Treatment Facility	\$ 2,500,000.00	5 Years
2	Hardin	Eldora	Wastewater	Wastewater Lining & Treatment Facility	\$ 2,500,000.00	5 Years
2	Hardin	Hubbard	Wastewater	Wastewater Lining & Treatment Facility	\$ 2,500,000.00	5 Years
2	Hardin	Iowa Falls	Wastewater	Wastewater Lining & Treatment Facility	\$ 12,500,000.00	5 Years
2	Marshall	Melbourne	Wastewater	Wastewater Lining & Treatment Facility	\$ 1,000,000.00	5 Years
2	Marshall	State Center	Wastewater	Wastewater Lining & Treatment Facility	\$ 2,500,000.00	5 Years
2	Poweshiek	Brooklyn	Wastewater	Wastewater Lining & Treatment Facility	\$ 1,500,000.00	5 Years
3	Hardin	Ackley	Housing	Demolish Blighted Homes & Businesses	\$ 350,000.00	5 Years
3	Hardin	Eldora	Housing	Demolish Blighted Homes & Businesses	\$ 100,000.00	5 Years
3	Tama	Tama	Housing	Demolish Blighted Homes & Businesses	\$ 500,000.00	5 Years
2	Hardin	Alden	Water	New Water Well or Rural Water Connection	\$ 1,000,000.00	5 Years
2	Hardin	Iowa Falls	Water	New Water Well	\$ 1,500,000.00	5 Years
2	Marshall	Albion	Water	New Water Well or Rural Water Connection	\$ 750,000.00	5 Years
1	Marshall	Alden	Transportation	Repavement Project	\$ 1,000,000.00	5 Years
1	Poweshiek	Brooklyn	Transportation	Repavement Project	\$ 1,500,000.00	5 Years
1	Poweshiek	Grinnell	Transportation	Repavement Project	\$ 4,000,000.00	5 Years
1	Poweshiek	Montezuma	Transportation	Repavement Project	\$ 1,500,000.00	5 Years
1	Tama	Dysart	Transportation	Repavement Project	\$ 1,500,000.00	5 Years
1	Tama	Traer	Transportation	Repavement Project	\$ 1,500,000.00	5 Years
1	Tama	Montour	Transportation	Bridge Replacement	\$ 200,000.00	5 Years
5	Hardin	Alden	Recreation	Replace Local Swimming Pool	\$ 500,000.00	5 Years
2	Hardin	Hubbard	Other	Replace / Expand Local Medical Clinic	\$ 1,000,000.00	5 Years
5	Hardin	Radcliffe	Recreation	Larger Community Center / Rehabilitation	\$ 750,000.00	5 Years
5	Marshall	LeGrand	Recreation	Larger Community Center / Rehabilitation	\$ 200,000.00	5 Years
5	Poweshiek	Grinnell	Recreation	Recreational Trail Improvements	\$ 500,000.00	5 Years
2	Hardin	Radcliffe	Water	Water Treatment System Improvements	\$ 1,000,000.00	5 Years

2	Marshall	Albion	Water	Water Treatment System Improvements	\$ 1,500,000.00	5 Years
2	Marshall	Giman	Water	Water Treatment System Improvements	\$ 1,500,000.00	5 Years
2	Marshall	Laurel	Water	Water Treatment System Improvements	\$ 2,000,000.00	5 Years
2	Marshall	LeGrand	Water	Water Treatment System Improvements	\$ 2,000,000.00	5 Years
2	Marshall	State Center	Water	Water Treatment System Improvements	\$ 2,000,000.00	5 Years
2	Poweshiek	Brooklyn	Water	Water Treatment System Improvements	\$ 2,500,000.00	5 Years
2	Poweshiek	Grinnell	Water	Water Treatment System Improvements	\$ 1,500,000.00	5 Years
2	Tama	Garwin	Water	Water Treatment System Improvements	\$ 1,000,000.00	5 Years
2	Tama	Gladbrook	Water	Water Treatment System Improvements	\$ 1,000,000.00	5 Years
2	Tama	Montour	Water	Water Treatment System Improvements	\$ 750,000.00	5 Years
2	Tama	Toledo	Water	Water Treatment System Improvements	\$ 1,500,000.00	5 Years
2	Tama	Traer	Water	Water Treatment System Improvements	\$ 1,000,000.00	5 Years
3	Marshall	Albion	Other	Tear Down Old School Building	\$ 200,000.00	5 Years
2	Marshall	Laurel	Water	Water Meter Replacement	\$ 20,000.00	5 Years
2	Tama	Garwin	Public Safety	New Fire Station	\$ 500,000.00	5 Years
2	Tama	Traer	Public Safety	New Public Safety Building	\$ 1,000,000.00	5 Years
2	Poweshiek	Brooklyn	Other	New Public Works Facility	\$ 1,000,000.00	5 Years
1	Tama	Toledo	Economic Development	Downtown Redevelopment	\$ 750,000.00	5 Years
1	Tama	Toledo	Economic Development	Repurpose The State Juvenile Detention Cntr	\$ 4,000,000.00	5 Years
1	Hardin	Ackley	Economic Development	Construct a Spec Building	\$ 300,000.00	5 Years
1	Hardin	Eldora	Economic Development	Expand Industrial Park	\$ 1,000,000.00	5 Years
1	Marshall	Marshalltown	Economic Development	Expand Industrial Park	\$ 3,000,000.00	5 Years
1	Poweshiek	Brooklyn	Economic Development	Expand Industrial Park	\$ 1,000,000.00	5 Years
1	Tama	Tama	Economic Development	Expand Industrial Park	\$ 1,000,000.00	5 Years
1	Hardin	Iowa Falls	Economic Development	Develop Railroad Industrial Park	\$ 10,000,000.00	5 Years
1	Hardin	Iowa Falls	Economic Development	Extend Infrastructure for Annexed Land	\$ 3,000,000.00	5 Years
1	Poweshiek	Grinnell	Economic Development	Community Business Investment Fund	\$ 500,000.00	5 Years
2	Tama	Dysart	Economic Development	Construct Assisted Living Center	<u>\$ 1,500,000.00</u>	5 Years
Identified Projects Total					\$91,370,000.00	

Projects By Type:

Goal	County	City	Type of Project	Details	Estimated Cost	Timeline
1	Tama	Toledo	Economic Dev.	Downtown Redevelopment	\$ 750,000.00	5 Years
1	Tama	Toledo	Economic Dev.	Repurpose The State Juvenile Det Cntr	\$ 4,000,000.00	5 Years
1	Hardin	Ackley	Economic Dev.	Construct a Spec Building	\$ 300,000.00	5 Years
1	Hardin	Eldora	Economic Dev.	Expand Industrial Park	\$ 1,000,000.00	5 Years
1	Marshall	Marshalltown	Economic Dev.	Expand Industrial Park	\$ 3,000,000.00	5 Years
1	Poweshiek	Brooklyn	Economic Dev.	Expand Industrial Park	\$ 1,000,000.00	5 Years
1	Tama	Tama	Economic Dev.	Expand Industrial Park	\$ 1,000,000.00	5 Years
1	Hardin	Iowa Falls	Economic Dev.	Develop Railroad Industrial Park	\$ 10,000,000.00	5 Years
1	Hardin	Iowa Falls	Economic Dev.	Extend Infrastructure for Annexed Land	\$ 3,000,000.00	5 Years
1	Poweshiek	Grinnell	Economic Dev.	Community Business Investment Fund	\$ 500,000.00	5 Years
2	Tama	Dysart	Economic Dev.	Construct Assisted Living Center	<u>\$ 1,500,000.00</u>	5 Years
Total					\$ 26,050,000.00	
Goal	County	City	Type of Project	Details	Estimated Cost	Timeline
3	Hardin	Ackley	Housing	Demolish Blighted Homes & Businesses	\$ 350,000.00	5 Years
3	Hardin	Eldora	Housing	Demolish Blighted Homes & Businesses	\$ 100,000.00	5 Years
3	Tama	Tama	Housing	Demolish Blighted Homes & Businesses	<u>\$ 500,000.00</u>	5 Years
Total					\$ 950,000.00	
Goal	County	City	Type of Project	Details	Estimated Cost	Timeline
2	Hardin	Hubbard	Other	Replace / Expand Local Medical Clinic	\$ 1,000,000.00	5 Years
3	Marshall	Albion	Other	Tear Down Old School Building	\$ 200,000.00	5 Years
2	Poweshiek	Brooklyn	Other	New Public Works Facility	<u>\$ 1,000,000.00</u>	5 Years
Total					\$ 2,200,000.00	
Goal	County	City	Type of Project	Details	Estimated Cost	Timeline

2	Tama	Garwin	Public Safety	New Fire Station	\$ 500,000.00	5 Years
2	Tama	Traer	Public Safety	New Public Safety Building	<u>\$ 1,000,000.00</u>	5 Years
Total					\$ 1,500,000.00	
Goal	County	City	Type of Project	Details	Estimated Cost	Timeline
5	Hardin	Alden	Recreation	Replace Local Swimming Pool	\$ 500,000.00	5 Years
5	Hardin	Radcliffe	Recreation	Larger Comm Center / Rehab	\$ 750,000.00	5 Years
5	Marshall	LeGrand	Recreation	Larger Comm Center / Rehab	\$ 200,000.00	5 Years
5	Poweshiek	Grinnell	Recreation	Recreational Trail Improvements	<u>\$ 500,000.00</u>	5 Years
Total					\$ 1,950,000.00	
Goal	County	City	Type of Project	Details	Estimated Cost	Timeline
1	Marshall	Alden	Transportation	Repavement Project	\$ 1,000,000.00	5 Years
1	Poweshiek	Brooklyn	Transportation	Repavement Project	\$ 1,500,000.00	5 Years
1	Poweshiek	Grinnell	Transportation	Repavement Project	\$ 4,000,000.00	5 Years
1	Poweshiek	Montezuma	Transportation	Repavement Project	\$ 1,500,000.00	5 Years
1	Tama	Dysart	Transportation	Repavement Project	\$ 1,500,000.00	5 Years
1	Tama	Traer	Transportation	Repavement Project	\$ 1,500,000.00	5 Years
1	Tama	Montour	Transportation	Bridge Replacement	<u>\$ 200,000.00</u>	5 Years
Total					\$ 11,200,000.00	
Goal	County	City	Type of Project	Details	Estimated Cost	Timeline
2	Hardin	Ackley	Wastewater	Wastewater Lining & Treatment Facility	\$ 2,500,000.00	5 Years
2	Hardin	Eldora	Wastewater	Wastewater Lining & Treatment Facility	\$ 2,500,000.00	5 Years
2	Hardin	Hubbard	Wastewater	Wastewater Lining & Treatment Facility	\$ 2,500,000.00	5 Years
2	Hardin	Iowa Falls	Wastewater	Wastewater Lining & Treatment Facility	\$ 12,500,000.00	5 Years
2	Marshall	Melbourne	Wastewater	Wastewater Lining & Treatment Facility	\$ 1,000,000.00	5 Years
2	Marshall	State Center	Wastewater	Wastewater Lining & Treatment Facility	\$ 2,500,000.00	5 Years
2	Poweshiek	Brooklyn	Wastewater	Wastewater Lining & Treatment Facility	<u>\$ 1,500,000.00</u>	5 Years
Total					\$ 25,000,000.00	

Goal	County	City	Type of Project	Details	Estimated Cost	Timeline
2	Hardin	Alden	Water	New Water Well or Rural Water Connection	\$ 1,000,000.00	5 Years
2	Hardin	Iowa Falls	Water	New Water Well	\$ 1,500,000.00	5 Years
2	Marshall	Albion	Water	New Water Well or Rural Water Connection	\$ 750,000.00	5 Years
2	Hardin	Radcliffe	Water	Water Treatment System Improvements	\$ 1,000,000.00	5 Years
2	Marshall	Albion	Water	Water Treatment System Improvements	\$ 1,500,000.00	5 Years
2	Marshall	Giman	Water	Water Treatment System Improvements	\$ 1,500,000.00	5 Years
2	Marshall	Laurel	Water	Water Treatment System Improvements	\$ 2,000,000.00	5 Years
2	Marshall	LeGrand	Water	Water Treatment System Improvements	\$ 2,000,000.00	5 Years
2	Marshall	State Center	Water	Water Treatment System Improvements	\$ 2,000,000.00	5 Years
2	Poweshiek	Brooklyn	Water	Water Treatment System Improvements	\$ 2,500,000.00	5 Years
2	Poweshiek	Grinnell	Water	Water Treatment System Improvements	\$ 1,500,000.00	5 Years
2	Tama	Garwin	Water	Water Treatment System Improvements	\$ 1,000,000.00	5 Years
2	Tama	Gladbrook	Water	Water Treatment System Improvements	\$ 1,000,000.00	5 Years
2	Tama	Montour	Water	Water Treatment System Improvements	\$ 750,000.00	5 Years
2	Tama	Toledo	Water	Water Treatment System Improvements	\$ 1,500,000.00	5 Years
2	Tama	Traer	Water	Water Treatment System Improvements	\$ 1,000,000.00	5 Years
2	Marshall	Laurel	Water	Water Meter Replacement	<u>\$ 20,000.00</u>	5 Years
Total					\$22,520,000.00	

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.

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, assist with 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 6 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, Peoplerides 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 outcome.

MONITORING STRATEGY PROGRESS

In order to ensure that the Region 6 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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Appendix A

COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY LOCAL INPUT

COMMON THEMES

- Need greater workforce.
- People not wanting to live in smaller places like most of the region.
- High demand for housing growth in South Tama County.
- Demand to get more professionals to live in Marshalltown and Grinnell vs driving in 45 minutes from metro areas.
- Specialized training facility for additional workers in fields without sufficient labor – construction, general manufacturing.
- Unsure on demand for commercial and residential growth in small towns.
- Investors for projects where demand somewhat present.
- Many places doing quality of life improvements with an interest in attracting more workers.
- Many places with wastewater improvement needs to meet DNR/EPA standards. EPA pushing clean water standards hard in Iowa. Since agriculture is largely unregulated, the new standards come down hard on Iowa cities.
- Old water and sewer mains.
- Strong interest in repaving local streets.



ACKLEY

STRENGTHS -

- Available land for industrial expansion.
- New Ackley Medical clinic.
- Community daycare facility operated by local public school system.
- New fire station and library.
- Golf course and clubhouse.

NEEDS -

- Supply of labor force.
- People not want to live in rural places without urban style amenities.
- Hard to recruit professionals.
- Need more industrial type buildings. Spec buildings.
- Need more small businesses in the downtown.
- Approximately 30 vacant homes scattered across the city.
- Need lots for small commercial operation expansions. This would be small shops like for plumbers, HVAC, etc...
- Younger people not willing to do 2-year degree programs and work at local employers.
- Need new wastewater treatment facility to meet IDNR standards. Need to line more sewers to reduce wastewater flows.
- Repaint water tower.
- Attracting labor force.

TOP 3 PRIORITIES OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS -

- Quality of life improvement projects.
- Expand the supply of rentals and lots for new housing construction.
- Downtown revitalization.

INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCIAL NEED 5-YEAR ESTIMATE –

- Wastewater system lining = \$2-3 million
- Blighted home removal = \$350,000

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECT FINANCIAL NEED 5-YEAR ESTIMATE –

Construct a spec building = \$300,000



ALDEN

STRENGTHS -

- Scenic waterfront.
- Good wastewater service.
- Nice expanded public library.

NEEDS -

- Water level dropping in well. May be due to local limestone production places interrupting the aquifer.
- Swimming pool leaks.
- Old vacant buildings in downtown

TOP 3 PRIORITIES OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS -

- New well and possibly treatment.
- Improve the Main Street from Bridge to D20.

INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCIAL NEED 5-YEAR ESTIMATE –

- New water well = \$1 million
- Repave Main Street from D20 to Iowa River Bridge = \$1 million
- Replace swimming pool = \$500,000

ELDORA

STRENGTHS -

- Good water and sewer treatment facilities.
- Affordable housing.
- Downtown buildings in fairly good shape and fairly well occupied.

NEEDS -

- More lots for commercial or industrial growth. Little demand present however.
- Cleanup the community – old commercial (especially along Hwy 175) and residential (especially rentals).
- Cleanup old occupied trailer court. Hot spot for crime and problems.
- Sufficient quality workforce.
- Common goals and objectives.
- Several downtown commercial spaces available and one larger former industrial building.

TOP 3 PRIORITIES OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS -

- Cleanup the community.
- Improve wastewater collection system and water distribution system. No funds available.
- Possibly new ambulance building.

INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCIAL NEED 5-YEAR ESTIMATE –

- Wastewater system lining = \$2-3 million
- Blighted home and commercial removal = \$100,000

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECT FINANCIAL NEED 5-YEAR ESTIMATE –

Expand industrial park = \$1 million



HUBBARD

STRENGTHS -

- New water treatment plant, water tower, and some distribution mains.
- New wastewater treatment facility.
- Improved city hall.
- Nice fire station.
- New community library.
- Clean and occupied downtown.
- Community nursing home.
- Clean community.
- Cheaper housing for Ames area or other communities across Hardin County.

NEEDS -

- Line the wastewater system to reduce sewer backups and bypasses in 50-60 homes.
- Replace and expand Ackley Medical Clinic.
- 5-8 homes whose occupants have drug problems. 50% are rentals.
- 20 vacant homes across the city. Many in poor condition.
- Improve the Main Street through the city.

TOP 3 PRIORITIES OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS -

- Fix the sewer - \$3 million project.

INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCIAL NEED 5-YEAR ESTIMATE –

- Wastewater system lining = \$2-3 million
- Replace and expand medical clinic (private non-profit clinic) = \$1 million

IOWA FALLS

STRENGTHS -

- Crossroads of North-South Union Pacific line and Canadian National Railroad line to Omaha.
- Highway 20 4-lane is about 3 miles South of the current city limits.
- Nice commercial airport.
- Scenic city with nice parks, trail system, library, downtown, small businesses, community college, and public buildings.
- New hospital.

NEEDS -

- At capacity with the wastewater treatment facility. New facility is in planning for 5-8 years out.
- Need more water treatment and supply. City is at capacity on this also. Planning for improvements 5 years out or so.
- Community daycare facility.
- Need more housing options – rental and owner. 20 condo type units at former hospital building. Lot will include 50-70 other housing options.
- Need more skilled workers.
- Need lots in the city limits that are attractive for new housing construction.
- Industrial park expansion – maybe out by Hwy 20.
- Replace city hall.
- Replace some bridges – River Road and Elk Run.
- Manifest yard for CN and UPRR for transload. \$15 million for track improvements. \$2-3 million for water and sewer. Would create 295 acre industrial park.

TOP 3 PRIORITIES OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS -

- Intermodal park at the UPRR and CN railroad intersection.
- Annex from the current city out to Highway 20. Hwy 20 would be truck stop and hotel interchange.
- Continue to upgrade infrastructure.
- Sell the spec building in the industrial park.

INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCIAL NEED 5-YEAR ESTIMATE –

- Wastewater system replacement in 5-10 years = \$10-15 million
- Additional water well = \$1-2 million

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECT FINANCIAL NEED 5-YEAR ESTIMATE –

- Develop intermodal railroad industrial park = \$10 million
- Extend public infrastructure from current city to Hwy 20 = \$3 million
-

RADCLIFFE

STRENGTHS -

- City will be undertaking a large project in 2017 to improve Main Street with lighting, infrastructure improvements. Funded by wind turbine TIF.
- Newer wastewater treatment facility.
- Nice newer library, fire station, and improved city hall.
- Storm sewer improvements to prevent flooding.

NEEDS -

- Tear down a few buildings on main street that are dilapidated.
- Water tower is very old but reportedly in fair condition.
- The water treatment facility is also 30 years old so some improvements may be needed down the road.
- Community center for larger public events.

TOP 3 PRIORITIES OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS -

- Complete downtown street improvement project.

INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCIAL NEED 5-YEAR ESTIMATE –

- Larger community center facility = \$500,000 – 1 million
- Water system improvements (5 – years out) = \$1 million

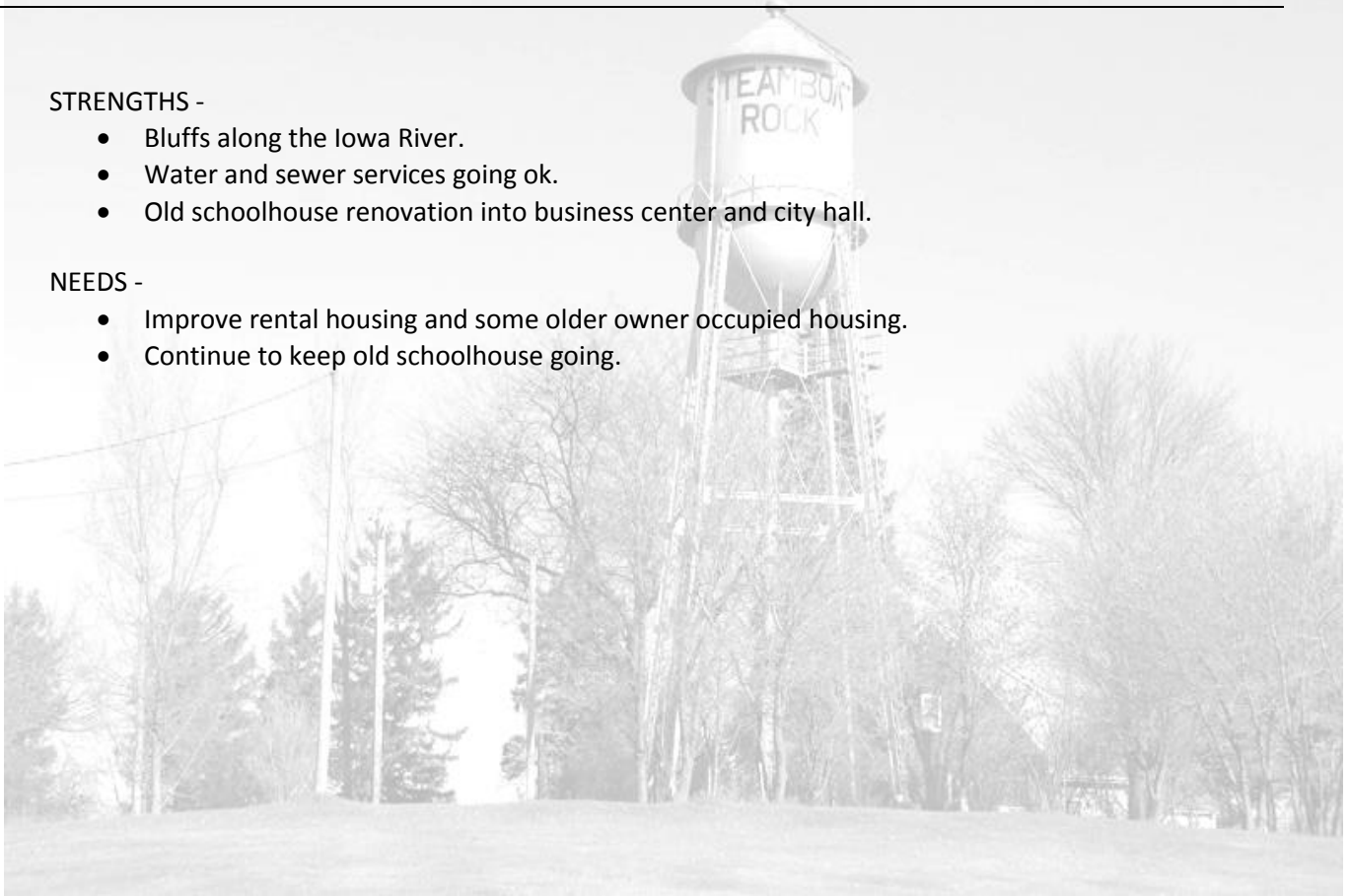
STEAMBOAT ROCK

STRENGTHS -

- Bluffs along the Iowa River.
- Water and sewer services going ok.
- Old schoolhouse renovation into business center and city hall.

NEEDS -

- Improve rental housing and some older owner occupied housing.
- Continue to keep old schoolhouse going.



ALBION

STRENGTHS -

- New water treatment plant.
- New wells for water treatment plant.

NEEDS -

- Demolish old schoolhouse building – owned by city.
- Relocate a commercial business from the old schoolhouse building to a new building on the lot.
- Upgrade the wastewater treatment facility.
- Connect to rural water or drill a deep well.

TOP 3 PRIORITIES OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS -

- Demolish school.
- Find a second source of water.

INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCIAL NEED 5-YEAR ESTIMATE –

- Wastewater system improvement = \$1-2 million
- Water source improvements = \$500,000 to 1 million
- Demolish old school building = \$200,000



GILMAN

STRENGTHS -

- On rural water.
- Good local streets.

NEEDS -

- Wastewater treatment improvements to meet DNR standards.
- Need to resurface farm to market road next year.
- Improve Hwy 146 North and South of town.

TOP 3 PRIORITIES OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS -

- Wastewater treatment improvement.
- Improve farm to market road.

INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCIAL NEED 5-YEAR ESTIMATE –

- Wastewater treatment improvement = \$1-2 million

LAUREL



STRENGTHS -

- Rural water provides water service.
- Good fire station, library, and city hall.
- Existing houses and rental units filled.
- Has a USDA RD subsidized rental unit that is filled.

NEEDS -

- Lots on market for any residential growth. Farmers not willing to sell.
- No lots readily available for any commercial expansion.
- Replace water meters.
- Need to upgrade wastewater treatment system to meet IDNR standards.
- 90% of town has transite asbestos cement water pipe.

TOP 3 PRIORITIES OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS -

- Street improvements.
- Wastewater treatment upgrade – 2023.
- Water meter upgrades.

INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCIAL NEED 5-YEAR ESTIMATE –

- Wastewater system improvement = \$2 million
- Water meter replacement = \$20,000

LE GRAND



STRENGTHS -

- Good water.
- Good local roads.
- Good fire station.
- City hall in good condition.
- Generally clean town with newer housing.
- Bedroom community.

NEEDS -

- More small businesses.
- Lack of land with services for commercial or residential growth.
- Sewer treatment upgrade to meet DNR standards = \$2.3 million.
- Old Hwy 30 water main upgrade = \$300,000.
- Community center rehab – rotting log walls, need to replace HVAC.

TOP 3 PRIORITIES OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS -

- Sewer treatment upgrade.
- Hwy 146 bridge over UPRR moving utilities.
- Community center rehab.

INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCIAL NEED 5-YEAR ESTIMATE –

- Wastewater treatment improvement = \$2 million
- Rehabilitate the community center = \$200,000

MARSHALLTOWN

STRENGTHS -

160 market rate units built in the last 12-18 months.

NEEDS -

- More market rate housing. \$200,000-250,000.
- 22% of workforce drive into Marshalltown. 1500 more people come in than go out.
- Attracting younger people to live in Marshalltown vs Ankeny, Bondurant, and Ames.
- Better broadband service options. Fiber to all the homes. Mediacom provides broadband but service is questionable.
- Need more workers especially in construction field. Many of the sub crafts for new housing coming in from out of town.
- Need more training options for construction workers.
- Need more lots for industrial park (shovel ready), especially with UPRR rail access. Only one lot with 25 acres is available.
- Need more water capacity. 9.5 of 12.0 peak capacity is used.

TOP 3 PRIORITIES OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS -

INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCIAL NEED 5-YEAR ESTIMATE –

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECT FINANCIAL NEED 5-YEAR ESTIMATE –

Industrial park expansion with rail access = \$3 million

MELBOURNE

STRENGTHS -

- Melbourne is a bedroom community for Des Moines, Marshalltown, Ames, and Nevada.
- Strong housing market.
- Good fire station, park system, and library.
- People want to be part of the West Marshall School System.
- Downtown businesses are filled.

NEEDS -

- Lots for commercial and residential expansion. Unsure on the demand.
- Surface storm water pooling in the low area by the community center. May contribute to high I/I flows to wastewater treatment facility.
- May need to add more wastewater treatment storage and disinfection.
- Need more quality rentals.
- Several problem properties – old lumber yard junk yard, old school house demolition, and trailer park poor quality rentals. City is working hard to get things cleaned up.
- Improve the exterior of downtown commercial businesses.

TOP 3 PRIORITIES OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS -

- Street Improvements.
- Sewer lining type work to reduce flows.

INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCIAL NEED 5-YEAR ESTIMATE –

- Wastewater system lining = \$1 million

STATE CENTER

STRENGTHS -

- Spent \$500,000 on well improvements.
- Water tower in good condition.
- Nice downtown.
- New housing subdivision.
- State Center owns the gas, electric, sewer, and water services.
- Most of the old sewer system has been relined.

NEEDS -

- East Main Street improve and 4th Street.
- Mechanic for the community.
- Hardware store for the community.
- HVAC technician for the community.
- Lots for commercial growth.
- Residential property cleanup.
- Expand the fire station.
- City has 30% water loss in the distribution system. Many old 1920s vintage pipes. Many 4" pipes, old valves and hydrants that not work well. Current design standard for fire fighting is 6" mains with good valves and hydrants.
- City will likely need to upgrade the wastewater treatment system to meet IDNR standards. Likely needs include adding storage, disinfection, and possibly going to a mechanical plant.

TOP 3 PRIORITIES OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS -

- Street Improvements: 3rd Street Northwest. \$1.5 million.
- Commercial incentives for business community needs.
- Library improvements.

INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCIAL NEED 5-YEAR ESTIMATE –

- Wastewater treatment improvement = \$2-3 million
- Water line improvements = \$2 million
- Construct new fire station = \$1 million

BROOKLYN

STRENGTHS -

- New fire station.
- New library.
- Nice new community center.
- City hall remodeled.
- Poweshiek Water Association connection.
- Well occupied and maintained downtown.
- Nice businesses with one expansion in industrial park.

NEEDS -

- 1 lot left at the industrial park. Need to further expand in future.
- 1896 water and sewer distribution and collection system. System will need to be improved.
- Paving some parking lots in downtown area.
- Improve the downtown alley and infrastructure in the area.
- Uncertainty over old Brooklyn Opera House (vacant and questionable condition) and old Brooklyn Pharmacy downtown building. Maybe some need to demolish these buildings in the future.
- Resurface part of V18 Jackson Street in 5 years. \$1-2 million project with the underground utilities.
- Need to resurface local city streets.
- Need to replace city public works facility.

TOP 3 PRIORITIES OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS -

- Downtown paved parking.
- Pave downtown alley.

INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCIAL NEED 5-YEAR ESTIMATE –

- Wastewater system lining = \$1-2 million
- Road improvements = \$1-2 million
- Water line replacements = \$2-3 million
- Replace public works facility = \$1 million

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECT FINANCIAL NEED 5-YEAR ESTIMATE –

- Expand industrial park = \$1 million

GRINNELL

STRENGTHS -

- Adequate land for industrial and commercial growth.
- Recognized nice community.
- 1.4 ratio of people coming into Grinnell vs going out.
- Water plant is in good condition.
- Sewer treatment plant will be replaced in late 2017 and 2018.
- New library, public safety building, and city hall.
- Hotels along the interstate and downtown.
- Restaurants.
- Nice downtown.
- Nice park systems.
- Grinnell College.

NEEDS -

- Create an image that will attract more people.
- More workers for commercial enterprises.
- Many people driving into Grinnell to work from other places.
- Need more affordable quality housing. Especially rentals.
- Need developers to partner with on commercial and residential development projects. Return on investment not match some of the high growth places. Need people that are civic minded.
- Elevated water storage on the South Side of the community near Grinnell Reinsurance. 2 million gallons needed.
- Replace and loop some water mains.
- Pavement rehabilitation on East Street and 4th Avenue West of new City Hall.
- Rehabilitate or improve the veterans memorial building.
- Improve broadband service. Mediacom provides broadband service but quality and customer service could be improved.
- Pave trail from Industrial Road to Stage Coach Road and I80 to Grinnell Reinsurance.
- Better college programs for trades – machining, construction, etc...
- Need pharmacy for smaller towns outside Grinnell.
- Poor or marginal quality Section 8 rental units, especially outside Grinnell. 10-20 units out of Grinnell and 130-140 rental units in Grinnell that subsidized. All in private rentals. Units have not been updated.

TOP 3 PRIORITIES OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS -

- Rental inspection standards.
- Repair and replace sidewalks.
- Improve the vibrancy of downtown.
- Partner with community and school on Capstone program similar to Waukee or Cedar Rapids.
- Continuing education for employers.

INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCIAL NEED 5-YEAR ESTIMATE –

- Elevated water storage = \$1-2 million
- Improve veterans memorial building = \$1 million
- Recreational trail improvements = \$500,000
- Road improvements = \$3-5 million

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECT FINANCIAL NEED 5-YEAR ESTIMATE –

- Community business investment fund = \$500,000



MALCOM

STRENGTHS -

- Clean community.
- Good streets.
- Connected to Poweshiek Water Association.
- Affordable housing.
- BASF plant going well.
- Heartland Coop expanding elevator.
- Iowa Interstate Railroad connection.

NEEDS -

- Update city codes and plans.

TOP 3 PRIORITIES OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS -

- Improve roads.

MONTEZUMA

STRENGTHS -

- Restaurants downtown.
- Facades improved around downtown.
- Affordable housing.
- Good industrial base.
- Connection to Lake Ponderosa.
- New water treatment facility.

NEEDS -

- Improve wastewater treatment facility to meet new DNR standards.
- New houses built in new subdivision.
- Industrial park for new commercial and industrial businesses.
- Improve older deteriorated housing.

TOP 3 PRIORITIES OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS -

- Improve wastewater system.
- Improve existing housing with state and federal programs.
- Attract more housing construction and growth.

INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCIAL NEED 5-YEAR ESTIMATE –

- Wastewater treatment improvement = \$2 million
- Road improvements = \$1-2 million

CLUTIER

STRENGTHS -

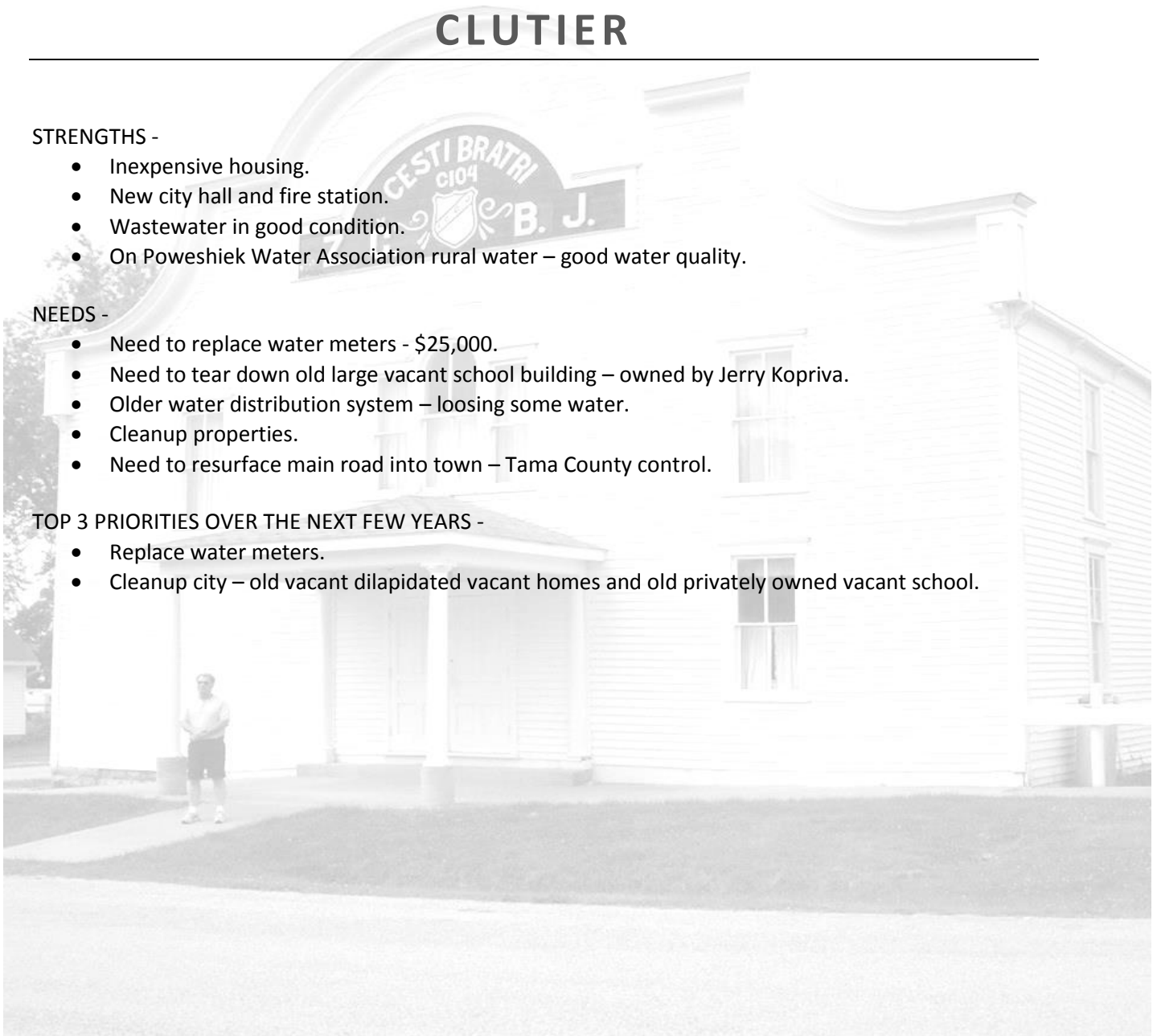
- Inexpensive housing.
- New city hall and fire station.
- Wastewater in good condition.
- On Poweshiek Water Association rural water – good water quality.

NEEDS -

- Need to replace water meters - \$25,000.
- Need to tear down old large vacant school building – owned by Jerry Kopriva.
- Older water distribution system – losing some water.
- Cleanup properties.
- Need to resurface main road into town – Tama County control.

TOP 3 PRIORITIES OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS -

- Replace water meters.
- Cleanup city – old vacant dilapidated vacant homes and old privately owned vacant school.





DYSART

STRENGTHS -

- Downtown with lots of activity.
- Proximity to Waterloo – 20 miles.
- Clean community with small school system.
- Trail system.
- New library, remodeled community center.

NEEDS -

- Street improvements.
- More rental housing.
- Old water mains.
- Housing improvements in scattered locations.
- Wastewater treatment improvement.

TOP 3 PRIORITIES OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS -

- Street improvements.
- Assisted living.
- Rental housing.

INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCIAL NEED 5-YEAR ESTIMATE –

- Wastewater treatment improvement = \$2-3 million
- Street improvements = \$1-2 million

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECT FINANCIAL NEED 5-YEAR ESTIMATE –

- Construct assisted living unit for seniors = \$1-2 million

GARWIN

STRENGTHS -

- Clean community with affordable housing.

NEEDS -

- Improve water mains. Discolored water. Hydrants are not usable.
- New fire station. Old station is in very poor condition.
- Demolish old dilapidated vacant homes.
- Remove or treat 65 ash trees in the city property.
- Improve 1 bridge at Carlton and 4th St.

TOP 3 PRIORITIES OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS -

- Improve water mains. Discolored water.
- New fire station. Old station is in very poor condition.
- Remove or treat 65 ash trees in the city property.

INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCIAL NEED 5-YEAR ESTIMATE –

- Water main improvements = \$1 million
- New fire station = \$500,000



GLADBROOK

STRENGTHS -

- Clean bedroom town with affordable housing.
- Gladbrook housing development group. Currently building one spec single family home.

NEEDS -

- Vacant main street. 3-4 more buildings likely need to be torn down due to fire in one building that was removed.
- Not many direct employers in the city.
- Need a new well and water source. City has an emergency connection to Central Iowa Water Association.
- No current lots for commercial growth.

TOP 3 PRIORITIES OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS -

- New well or permanently connect to rural water.
- Downtown redevelopment.

INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCIAL NEED 5-YEAR ESTIMATE –

- Water source improvement = \$1 million

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MONTOUR

STRENGTHS -

- Affordable housing.
- Home of Rube's steakhouse.

NEEDS -

- Tear down 2 abandoned homes.
- Tear down blighted and dilapidated school currently owned by J Paustian. School may become a public health nuisance. Contains asbestos.
- Replace water lines. Many 2" water mains. Pressure and flow a problem during heavy usage times.
- Replace bridge on Jacobs Street.
- Some concern about adequate sewer storage capacity. May need to add more capacity to meet IDNR expectations.
- Improve city streets.

TOP 3 PRIORITIES OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS -

- Town cleanup.
- Replace water mains with 6" pipe.
- Replace Jacobs Street bridge.
- Wastewater treatment improvements.

INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCIAL NEED 5-YEAR ESTIMATE –

- Replace water mains = \$500,000- 1 million
- Replace Jacobs Street Bridge = \$200,000
- Wastewater treatment improvements = \$200,000

TAMA

STRENGTHS -

- 870 people working now at Iowa Premium.
- City has taken several steps to improve water system and wastewater collection system.
- Flood control protection.
- Good fire station, library, and other public buildings.

NEEDS -

- Housing for 870 new workers at Iowa Premium. About 10% of the workforce lives in Tama County. The other 90% commutes in from Des Moines, Cedar Rapids, and Waterloo.
- No location for commercial or residential growth.
- Rebuild the old vacant buildings in downtown.
- Finding workforce for all the job growth. The extremely tight market limits any future growth.
- Demolish 15-30 vacant dilapidated houses and commercial buildings.
- Upgrade the wastewater treatment facility to meet new DNR standards within the next 5 years.
- City may need to upgrade one \$430,000 piece of equipment in 5-10 year old water treatment facility.
- Repair old Lincoln Highway bridge on 5th Street.

TOP 3 PRIORITIES OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS -

- Downtown redevelopment.
- Affordable housing growth.
- Demolish vacant dilapidated homes.

INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCIAL NEED 5-YEAR ESTIMATE –

- Upgrade wastewater treatment facility = \$10 million
- Dilapidated housing and commercial cleanup = \$500,000

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECT FINANCIAL NEED 5-YEAR ESTIMATE –

- Industrial park creation = \$1 million

TOLEDO

STRENGTHS -

- New water and sewer treatment facilities.
- Community daycare facility.
- Improved library.
- Nice community center.
- Nice performing arts facility.
- Nice public works facility.

NEEDS -

- Lots available for housing growth.
- Reuse the former Iowa Girls Juvenile Home into another use.
- Downtown redevelopment.
- City Hall needs to be upgraded.
- Need to upgrade water and sewer mains.

TOP 3 PRIORITIES OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS -

- City hall improvements.
- Downtown redevelopment.
- Water meter replacement.

INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCIAL NEED 5-YEAR ESTIMATE –

- Downtown redevelopment = \$500,000 – 1 million
- Line sewer mains = \$2-3 million
- Water main improvements = \$1-2 million

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECT FINANCIAL NEED 5-YEAR ESTIMATE –

- Reuse the Iowa Girls Juvenile Home into another use - \$3-5 million

TRAER

STRENGTHS -

- Historic downtown that is well occupied.
- New library.
- Constructing new aquatic centre.
- Small school system with nice physical campus.
- Clean community.
- Locations for new housing growth – lots.
- Sewer in good condition.

NEEDS -

- Rehabilitate the water treatment facility.
- Construct new fire station (taller and more bays) and ambulance building.
- Location for commercial growth.
- Replace a bridge over 1st Street.
- More business and industry.
- Improve tax base.
- More lifeguards needed for pool.
- Address 4-5 abandoned homes.
- Need more rentals.

TOP 3 PRIORITIES OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS -

- Keep school going.
- Get pool built.
- Improve streets.

INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCIAL NEED 5-YEAR ESTIMATE –

- Rehabilitate the water treatment facility = \$1 million
- Construct a new public safety building = \$1 million
- Improve city streets = \$1-2 million

TAMA COUNTY

STRENGTHS -

- 870 new jobs at Iowa Premium beef packing.
- Very strong housing market.
- Available markets for Iowa Premium by-products – hides, by-products.

NEEDS -

- More housing for the 870 new workers.
- More skilled labor for current and new employers.
- Demolish vacant dilapidated homes and small commercial plots.
- Reuse the Iowa Juvenile Home for alternate housing.
- Broadband services throughout the county. Acrebroadband trying to sell shares to start a wireless broadband service. <http://www.acrebroadband.com/>

TOP 3 PRIORITIES OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS -

- Housing growth.
- Iowa Juvenile Home reuse.
- Broadband services.

INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCIAL NEED 5-YEAR ESTIMATE –

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECT FINANCIAL NEED 5-YEAR ESTIMATE –

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MESKWAKI TRIBE

STRENGTHS -

- Gaming revenue.
- Expanding number of housing units.
- Meskwaki Inc. and Economic Diversification.
- New school, public works facility, and medical clinic.
- Good water and sewer services.
- Available land for agriculture related activities.
- Funding to assist kids get 2 year or 4 year degrees.
- Available capital for economic diversification projects.

NEEDS -

- Need to build a business park for continued economic diversification and small business growth. These are new ventures with Meskwaki, Inc.
- Maybe a need for an incubator facility for new business growth projects.
- Need more housing units.
- Developing the local community workforce. Find employment opportunities for people on the settlement.
- Develop jobs for community members on the settlement after K12 education.

TOP 3 PRIORITIES OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS -

- Workforce development of community members.
- Economic development opportunities for community members.
- Housing growth.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECT FINANCIAL NEED 5-YEAR ESTIMATE –

- Development an industrial park = \$1 million
- Construct a business incubator = \$1 million

HARDIN COUNTY

STRENGTHS -

- Good county office space.
- Newer county law enforcement center with jail.
- Two railroads serve county – Union Pacific and Canadian National.
- Highway 20 is 4-laned from I35 to Dubuque through Hardin County.
- Pine Lake State Park.
- Affordable housing where available.
- No urgent current needs on rural sewer systems.

NEEDS -

- More good and affordable homes especially in the Iowa Falls area.
- Better internet in some of the communities.
- Improve rental housing and possibly have rental housing standard.
- Improve overall housing conditions.
- Fill vacant buildings on main street and other locations.
- Clean up dilapidated homes.
- Change image of the county to attract more millennials.
- Transitional housing for mentally ill people that are in county jails.
- Replace more bridges.
- Concern about some of the very small incorporated towns remaining viable as incorporated places.

INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCIAL NEED 5-YEAR ESTIMATE –

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECT FINANCIAL NEED 5-YEAR ESTIMATE –

MARSHALL COUNTY

STRENGTHS -

- Quality county office space.
- Newer county law enforcement center with jail.
- Newer sewage treatment facility for law enforcement center.
- New gas fired power plant.
- Union Pacific Railroad runs through the county.

NEEDS -

- More value added agriculture projects.
- Rail spur extension South of the Alliant Energy new gas fired power plant.
- Spec building in the industrial park.
- Elevate Highway 14 North of the Iowa River so that it not cause problem getting products to JBS Swift pork processing facility.
- Elevate Road from unincorporated Quarry to Main Road so that it not get isolated during floods.
- Replace the older Marshall County Secondary Road Maintenance Shop in Marshalltown.
- Replace the County Conservation Board shop at the Grimes Conservation Farm.
- Replace roof at the county courthouse.
- Update windows at the county annex building.
- Coordinated outdoor warning system for small towns and rural areas.
- Install backup power at the 4 county shops.
- Replace windows at the county Sherriff's office.
- Maybe expand the industrial park at the corner of Highway 30 and 330.
- Install centralized sewer system for Green Mountain.
- Replace more bridges.

TOP 3 PRIORITIES OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS -

- Replace bridges North of Marshalltown along Center Street.
- Maintain current county facilities.

INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCIAL NEED 5-YEAR ESTIMATE –

- Secondary Roads Building = \$1 million
- Conservation Board Maintenance Building = \$500,000
- Highway 14 North of Iowa River elevation = \$10 million
- Outdoor warning system for small towns and rural = \$200,000-500,000
- Sewer system for Green Mountain = \$2 million
- Energy system upgrades at county facilities = \$1 million
- Backup power for county shops = \$150,000

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECT FINANCIAL NEED 5-YEAR ESTIMATE –

- Expand the Consumers Energy Industrial Park = \$1 million
- Spec building at an industrial park = \$500,000



POWESHIEK COUNTY

STRENGTHS -

- Quality county office space.
- Newer county law enforcement center with jail.
- Iowa Interstate and Union Pacific Railroad.
- I80 runs across the county.
- Quality housing developments at Holiday Lake and Ponderosa Lake.
- No problems with rural areas where lot sizes too small for good compliant on-site sewer system.

NEEDS -

- More quality affordable housing – rental and single family.
- More people for local jobs.
- Attract more better wage jobs.
- Improve the farm economy.
- Redevelop the Malcom I80 gas stations (2) into a new use.
- Replace more bridges.
- Concern about some of the very small incorporated towns remaining viable as incorporated places.

INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCIAL NEED 5-YEAR ESTIMATE –

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECT FINANCIAL NEED 5-YEAR ESTIMATE –