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## Dubuque's Sustainability Partnerships Highlighted in National Report

DUBUQUE, Iowa – Partnerships can play a critical role in advancing sustainability programs and initiatives. That's the finding of a new National League of Cities report on Dubuque's sustainability initiatives, "Dubuque Gets Engaged: The Critical Role of Partnerships in Moving Sustainability Forward."

The report highlights the ways in which the City of Dubuque has utilized and institutionalized partnerships with a variety of stakeholders in order to pursue the Sustainable Dubuque vision. The 21-page report was developed by Raksha Vasudevan, senior sustainability associate at the National League of Cities (NLC). According to Vasudevan, the goal of the NLC report was to shed light on similar types of partnerships that other cities could engage in, appropriate strategies to bring in partners, and creative ways to leverage partners' resources and assets in order to successfully implement a city-led, community-supported sustainability initiative.

"In a time when every penny counts, local governments often struggle to implement sustainability programs because of concern over the lack of both capacity and funding. This issue hits home for small and large city governments alike," Vasudevan begins the report. "However, Dubuque is one of the communities that has developed effective and creative workarounds to this issue using strong partnerships to catalyze, promote, implement and maintain sustainability projects."

Vasudevan asserts that partnerships are an untapped or under-utilized asset in most communities, but they are nothing new in Dubuque. She says communities that have effectively utilized their local and regional partners — whether it be local businesses, faith-based organizations, non-profit organizations, or schools — have found that the reward is two–

fold. First, these groups are likely comprised of the very stakeholders that a city's sustainability initiatives are trying to engage. Second, such groups often have a longstanding history and connection with the community. Therefore, they provide invaluable access to harder-to-reach populations, as well as an on-the-ground outreach capacity that is critical to moving any sustainability initiative forward. Partners can provide the local knowledge that is critical to sustainability initiatives, the capacity to implement sustainability programs and the leverage that is necessary to get the community at large on board.

The report features six case studies that highlight successful partnerships between the City of Dubuque and Greater Dubuque Development Corporation, the East Central Intergovernmental Association, Sustainable City Network, the Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque, the Dubuque Metropolitan Area Solid Waste Agency, and Smarter Sustainable Dubuque/IBM Watson Research Center.

The case study was distributed to NLC members and is featured on the NLC's website as well as the NLC's Sustainable Cities Institute site, which provides city leaders and sustainability professionals with timely, vetted, and practical resources to identify and implement solutions to advance their goals and strengthen their communities.

The National League of Cities (NLC) is dedicated to helping city leaders build better communities. Working in partnership with the 49 state municipal leagues, NLC serves as a resource for the more than 19,000 cities, villages and towns it represents.

To view the report, visit:

<http://www.sustainabledubuque.org>

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