Dubuque, Iowa’s Historic Millwork District

A VISION OF SUSTAINABLE REDEVELOPMENT
“We need a visionary national urban policy that commits the federal government to a comprehensive effort to restore America’s cities to vigorous health.”

Richard Moe > Past President, National Trust for Historic Preservation, who visited Dubuque’s Historic Millwork District on February 19, 2009, when he was keynote speaker at the Growing Sustainable Communities Conference.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project Summary</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAST. PRESENT. FUTURE.</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imagine</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Arts</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable Vision</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A History of Partnership</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WANTED</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dubuque Intermodal Campus</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partners &amp; Awards</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“Dubuque is known for innovative and creative economic development strategies. The Millwork District redevelopment will bring new life and a new sense of community to an historical area of the city. It’s an all-out effort that can serve as a model for other communities who may want to preserve the past as they look to the future.”

The Honorable Senator Chuck Grassley > U.S. Senator, Iowa

THE GREATNESS OF THE PAST
REDISCOVERED THROUGH
THE POSSIBILITIES OF THE PRESENT.

“Creating livable communities will result in improved quality of life for all Americans and create a more efficient and more accessible transportation network that serves the needs of individual communities. Fostering the concept of livability in transportation projects and programs will help America’s neighborhoods become safer, healthier and more vibrant.”

Ray LaHood > U.S. Secretary of Transportation, National Sustainable Cities Tour, Dubuque, Sept 17, 2009; Secretary Ray LaHood, EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson & HUD Secretary Shawn Donovan met with Mayor Buol
Join us.

Dubuque’s Historic Millwork District is a keystone to the region’s premier sustainability vision and advanced economic development strategy. Featuring one million square feet of historic warehouse space ideal for urban mixed use development, the Millwork District is poised to attract entrepreneurs, residents, institutions and businesses that will fuel Dubuque’s globally competitive economy.

Dynamic public/private partnerships are committed to transforming the Millwork District into a model sustainable, livable community. This model can be replicated in communities across the country using our unique transportation alternatives, workforce housing options and economic opportunities. We invite you to join us as we embark on the innovative and sustainable redevelopment of the Millwork District.

We envision...

> Housing options for a diverse population, with new residents inhabiting old spaces
> A flourishing of arts and culture, both indoors and out
> Green technologies showcased as they save money and the environment in unison
> Neighbors greeting each other as they walk to work, school, home, the corner store or their favorite restaurant in walkable, livable neighborhoods
> A neighborhood food co-op offering fresh, local, healthy food options that enhance the health and well-being of the community
At the turn of the 20th Century, Dubuque’s Millwork District was the backbone of the regional economy. Dozens of companies, 2,500 employees, a District heating system and intimate connections to Downtown, the Port of Dubuque and the Washington Neighborhood characterized the District.

With complete streets and in the midst of the first major building rehabilitation, ultimately, one million square feet of nearly vacant warehouse space are poised for redevelopment thanks to National Register Historic District designation, community planning and strong public/private partnerships.

The District will reemerge as a livable community reconnected with surrounding neighborhoods; reenergized with housing, retail, offices, galleries, entertainment and employment; and reimagined as a model of sustainable practices and technologies.

“I am pleased that Dubuque, with its rich history and tradition has chosen to devote the energy and resources to revitalize the Millwork District. This is a great fusion of the region’s proud past with its vision of a revitalized and vibrant future. I can’t wait to visit!”

Terry E. Branstad > Governor of Iowa
CARADCO BUILDING PROJECT

The CARADCO Main Plant Building occupies an entire city block in the Historic Millwork District. A former millwork factory, built in six sections between 1880 and 1906, The CARADCO building is an historically honored structure in what was once the nation’s largest window and door manufacturing district. CARADCO stands for Carr, Ryder & Adams Company. Led by private investment, the CARADCO Building Project is piloting an exciting redevelopment phase in the Historic Millwork District. The 186,000 square-foot building is undergoing a $29 million renovation by Gronen Restoration and will feature 72 residential units on the second and third floors, 39,000 square feet of main level commercial and retail space, and 20,000 square-feet of lower level space designed to foster arts and culture, non-profits, and community initiatives. The space is scheduled to be available to residential tenants beginning in August 2012 and first floor commercial/retail tenants in Fall 2012. The project is fueling Dubuque’s economy by creating approximately 200 new jobs in Dubuque. For more information, visit www.caradcohmd.com

COMPLETE STREETS

The Historic Millwork District embraces sustainability as the key to the future of our community and underwent a “Complete Streets” transformation in 2010-2012. The complete streets will allow for use by a broad range of users including drivers, public transportation vehicles/riders, pedestrians, bicyclists, elderly, children, and people with disabilities. The U.S. Department of Transportation awarded the Millwork District Complete Streets project a $5.6 million grant through the TIGER Discretionary Grants Program.

Some highlights of the project include:
- reconstruction of underground utilities
- permeable paver systems and re-use of existing brick pavers in streetscape area
- reconstruction of the sidewalks
- new curbs and bump-outs
- energy-efficient historic street lighting

A $150,000 Iowa Great Places Grant supported an innovate streetscape project that imbued artistic elements into the entire Millwork District. A majority of the arts pieces were designed and produced by local artists and manufacturers.

Highlights of the project include:
- 50 sidewalk medallions
- 32 benches
- 20 waste receptacles
- 12 sewer lid sets
- 10 plaza planters
- 3 bus shelters
“These innovation hotbeds are not confined to any one part of the country. They’re thriving in places like Rochester, New York, and Dubuque, Iowa, and the Commerce Department is helping to create more.”


“Restoring older buildings is a win-win for communities like Dubuque: using existing buildings is the most sustainable way to create housing, jobs, and a more livable urban core while at the same time, boosting economic development. Dubuque is a model for cities and towns across the nation.”

The Honorable Tom Harkin > U.S. Senator, Iowa
At the turn of the 20th Century, the Millwork District flourished with the “lost arts” of millwork and metalwork. In the past decade, Dubuque’s thriving creative class has led the way in embracing these lost arts, recognizing the buildings as works of art and reclaiming the “urban core” district as a home for artists, craftspeople, cultural exhibits and events. Arts and cultural groups continue to spearhead projects in the district as public and private partners work to ensure that the neighborhood is reborn as a regional cultural hub – home to visual and performance art, artist live/work space, studios, galleries and cultural organizations.

“This is a fantastic creative placemaking project because, through the arts, they’re bringing this whole neighborhood back. I wish I could take Dubuque and plant dozens of them across the country. They really get it about the arts.”

Rocco Landesman > Chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), conducted a site visit of the Historic Millwork District in Dubuque in November of 2011 as part of a $100,000 Our Town Grant.
**Economic Prosperity**

- **Community Design**
  Mixed-income housing in the District helps employers attract and retain quality employees by offering urban housing options not currently available in Dubuque.

- **Smart Energy Use**
  Alternative/renewable energy systems and smart metering throughout the District will reduce energy consumption.

- **Resource Management**
  Historic rehab creates numerous high-skilled jobs, as more project dollars are allocated to labor than in new-construction.

- **Regional Economy**
  Public/private partnerships yield affordable commercial space where non-profits and small businesses can thrive in a collaborative environment.

The Four Mounds **H.E.A.R.T. YouthBuild** program provides youth (age 17-24) with meaningful education, community revitalization opportunities through service learning, skill building for green jobs, connections to post-secondary education and employment. Focusing on the Washington Neighborhood, adjacent to the Millwork District, participants are rehabilitating blighted properties into quality affordable housing, available to first time homeowners. Their planned headquarters in the Millwork District will facilitate the H.E.A.R.T YouthBuild program’s youth development work, as well as the reconnection of these historic neighborhoods.
SUSTAINABILITY BEGINS.

Social / Cultural Vibrancy

- **Green Buildings**
  Restoration and deconstruction services provide green-collar jobs and manage resources.

- **Healthy Local Food**
  Summer and winter farmers’ markets located only blocks from the District.

- **Community Knowledge**
  Public art and District history interpretive materials educate and add visual interest at every turn. Community engagement and cultural planning meetings held regularly.

- **Reasonable Mobility**
  Improved, walkable streetscapes, buildings with universal design and easy access to public transit provide opportunities for residents to interact.

Environmental / Ecological Integrity

- **Healthy Air**
  Low VOC construction materials, Green Seal maintenance & cleaning products and efficient HVAC systems protect indoor air quality.

- **Clean Water**
  Brownfield abatement, stormwater management and installation of new utilities and greywater systems protect our water, including the nearby Mississippi River.

- **Native Plants and Animals**
  Plenty of green space provides respite for urban dwellers and a home for local species.

Resources to Succeed

- **3,113,606** Estimated 100-mile population by 2012
- **285,572** Total 100-mile population of college students
With 150 years of prosperous growth under its belt, Dubuque suffered significant losses in population and jobs during the recession of the 1980s. Unemployment was high (23% in Jan. 1982), inflation reigned and the City lost 7.8% of its population in that decade.

Fortunately, Dubuque’s turnaround has been as remarkable as its downturn. Community leaders have created public and private partnerships over the past 25 years that have rebuilt this vibrant community. The Greater Dubuque Development Corporation has strengthened and diversified the workforce; philanthropic citizens and organizations have donated millions to public and private projects and charities; the revitalization of the Port of Dubuque has bolstered tourism, preserved our history and established a national interpretive center for the Mississippi River.

Now, the citizens of Dubuque are poised to build upon strong partnerships once again. **We are committed to redeveloping our Historic Millwork District in a way that benefits the entire community by:**

> Providing urban workforce housing...this will allow for more business attraction and retention, which in turn will increase our population and create a demand for more services.
> Increasing demand for services...this will grow small businesses, which will look for commercial space near their customers.
> Attracting young professionals who value smart urban growth, sustainability, and quality of life.

“We learned to develop partnerships, we learned to gather together, to leave our egos at the door and create a vision and then implement that vision, make it a reality.”

Nancy Van Milligen > President & CEO, Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque
WANTED > FEDERAL HISTORIC TAX CREDIT FOR DISASTER RECOVERY (FHTC)

Extension of the 26% FHTC that was included in the 2008 Heartland Disaster Relief Act is vital to the redevelopment of the Historic Millwork District. This three-year tax credit incentive for disaster-affected structures expired on December 31, 2011. Since this policy has been enacted, the 26% tax credit has helped make projects like the Roshek Building in Dubuque and the Paramount Theatre in flood-ravaged Cedar Rapids a reality. During a time when private capital investment has decreased and financial institutions are more reluctant to lend, the 26% credit is a key funding source in making historic rehabilitation projects possible.

WANTED > WORKFORCE HOUSING

Through the Low Income Housing 9% Tax Credit (LIHTC), developers have found a powerful tool. However, this tool does not address the need for workforce housing in small urban centers, similar to Dubuque.

Using all other currently-available programs except the LIHTC (i.e. Federal and State Historic Tax Credits, New Market Tax Credits, Enterprise Zone Credits, etc.), rents would have to be more than twice the market rental rate in order to make redevelopment possible. The only current way to offer appropriate rents that align with our market is to use the LIHTC.

Many current jobs in Dubuque — nurses, teachers, and police officers — offer salaries that exceed the household income-cap (60% area median income, or $26,000 annually) for LIHTC housing units. Their needs, and those of recent college graduates, will only be met if we can provide housing for which they qualify.

WANTED > COMPLETE STREETS

As outlined in the District Master Plan, Complete Streets design is being implemented for all streets within the District and connecting to the downtown business district and the Washington Neighborhood. Complete Streets will encourage multi-modal transportation (pedestrian, bicycle, and mass transit) within and out of the area to reduce automobile dependence.

Complete Streets are showcasing best practices that use permeable pavers to manage stormwater runoff, utilize energy-efficient lighting, and feature streetscape furniture such as bicycle racks and recycling containers that promote sustainable best practices.

With an estimated 60% of new residents in the Historic Millwork District working in the downtown area, many will likely travel the 3-5 block distance to work on foot or by bike.

On-street bike trails are also part of a regional network that connects the central, north and west areas of the community.

WANTED > CLEAN AIR & WATER

Permeable pavers, grey water collection systems, rooftop gardens, and green spaces are being incorporated into the redevelopment of the District to protect the community’s air and water quality, reduce greenhouse emissions, reduce reliance on wastewater systems, and manage stormwater locally.

“Redeveloping the Millwork District is the next step for Dubuque’s efforts to use the latest energy conservation technologies and strategies to revitalize its downtown.”

The Honorable Bruce Brailey >
U. S. Representative 1st Congressional District, Iowa
As the metropolitan service area for seven surrounding counties, Dubuque’s accessible transportation options continue to evolve. Phase one of Dubuque’s Intermodal Transportation Center (DITC) is underway in the Historic Millwork District. The project will complement and leverage the District’s Complete Streets and effectively incorporate bus, rail, and bicycle – providing a more livable, sustainable community.

With funding support from a State of Good Repair Grant from the U.S. DOT, the facility will provide:
- transit and rail connections
- vehicular and bicycle parking
- electric vehicle charging
- intercity bus, ticket station and passenger waiting area
- taxicab stands
- bus storage/maintenance station

For more information, visit www.cityofdubuque.org/DITC
PARTNERS:
> American Institute of Architects Communities by Design
> Alliant Energy
> City of Dubuque
> Climate Communities
> Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque
> Dubuque Area Chamber of Commerce
> Dubuque County
> Dubuque Initiatives
> Dubuque Main Street
> East Central Intergovernmental Association
> Envision 2010
> Fischer Companies
> Greater Dubuque Development Corporation
> Gronen Restoration
> Fly-By-Night Productions
> Four Mounds, H.E.A.R.T. Youth Build
> International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI)
> Jeld-Wen
> Julien International Film Festival Dubuque
> Matter
> National Trust for Historic Preservation, Office of Sustainability
> National Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium
> State of Iowa
> Voices from the Warehouse District
> Warehouse Trust
> Wilmac Properties

AWARDS:
Among other distinctions, public/private partnerships have earned Dubuque the following recognitions:
> 2011, 2010, 2008, 2007 100 Best Communities for Young People
> 2010 Best Small City to Raise a Family
> 2010 International Awards for Livable Communities - 3rd Place Finalist, Gold-Standard Community
> 2009 CNNMoney.com Top 50 Places to launch a Small Business
> 2009 EDA Excellence in Economic Development Award for Excellence in Historic Preservation-led Strategies
> 2009 Best Business Retention & Expansion Program Award
> 2009 RelocateAmerica.com Top 100 Places to Live
> 2008 Most Livable Small City in the United States
> 2007 All-America City
> 2006 National Trust for Historic Preservation Urban Pioneer Award
> 2006 Iowa Great Place
> 2006 Phoenix Award for Excellence in Brownfield Redevelopment
> 2005 National Trust for Historic Preservation Dozen Distinctive Destinations

For more information, visit www.cityofdubuque.org/DITC
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