



CHAPTER 5

SOCIAL + CULTURAL VIBRANCY

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CHAPTER 5

SOCIAL + CULTURAL VIBRANCY

Social and cultural vibrancy includes a variety of high-priority City objectives, ongoing investments and partnerships such as Inclusive Dubuque, the Multicultural Family Center, and Project HOPE, as well as an array of planning topics ranging from health and human services to culture, recreation, arts, and housing (addressed in Chapter 6).

Introduction

The Sustainable Dubuque model outlines four key principles of social and cultural vibrancy:

- ① Community Knowledge
- ② Green Buildings
- ③ Healthy Local Foods
- ④ Community Health and Safety



Social and cultural vibrancy is inextricably linked to our individual, community, and economic well-being. Equity also is supported and furthered by investments in social and cultural vibrancy. This chapter looks at specific elements of social and cultural vibrancy, and presents policies and strategies intended to strengthen and connect the many elements that together make for a vibrant place.

Planning for social and cultural vibrancy requires the City to orient its day-to-day and long-range actions and policies around ideas of connectedness, diversity, equity, and inclusion. Through partnerships such as Project HOPE (see *highlighted information on top of next page*), Dubuque Police's Enhanced Neighborhood Support process, Inclusive Dubuque, and the City Council's goal-setting process, these concepts have become better defined and understood in practice. Each of the vibrancy elements in this chapter has a strong relationship to building a community in which all individuals and groups have access to services, environments, and resources that promote their well-being as equally valued citizens of Dubuque. This chapter addresses needs for communication, facilities, and resources in each topic area that specifically support equity outcomes as well as overall community vibrancy.

Defining Connectedness, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The definitions of these terms are provided below to express how they are applied in Imagine Dubuque:¹

- ☐ **Diversity:** The unique perspectives and life experiences an individual or group brings to our community.
- ☐ **Equity:** Everyone has access to opportunities and the resources they need to thrive.
- ☐ **Inclusion:** Engaging and supporting diverse needs to ensure all feel welcome.
- ☐ **Equitable Community:** When all residents, regardless of their race/ethnicity/nationality, neighborhood of residence, or other characteristic, are able to fully participate in the community's economic and cultural success, and are able to connect with its assets and resources.



▲ Imagine Dubuque Focus Group with Inclusive Dubuque

¹ Inclusive Dubuque Snapshot, 10/9/2015; www.inclusiveDBQ.org

□ PROJECT HOPE



What it is: Project HOPE (Helping Our People Excel) is a community initiative, designed to serve as a catalyst, that helps service providers, employers, and individuals seeking employment build bridges to rewarding, long-term employment.

Why it matters: From 2000 to 2015, the percentage of individuals living below the poverty level in Dubuque increased from 9.5% to 16.2%. Research has shown that living in poverty can affect family stability, a child's readiness for school, their ability to learn, high school dropout rates, and physical health. All of these factors can affect someone's ability to advance their economic future.

↑ 6.7%

Increase of Dubuque individuals living below poverty level between 2000 and 2015



Elements of Social & Cultural Vibrancy

What Makes a Community “Vibrant”?

Q: *What are the elements present in a community that together create an environment conducive to spawning new business models and ideas, integrating new people, welcoming changing and sometimes challenging artistic and cultural expression, and maintaining a healthy and active lifestyle with ample recreation opportunities?*

A: **The short answer, a lot of things!** Through Imagine Dubuque, residents expressed strong feelings that vibrancy involves elements and actions related to the following eight planning areas:

- Healthy Local Foods
- Education, Community Knowledge + Empowerment
- Diversity + Inclusion
- Arts + Entertainment
- Green Buildings + Historic Preservation
- Community Safety
- Health + Human Services
- Recreation

The sections that follow address each of these planning areas. The recommendations and strategies at the end of this chapter are intended to support specific desired outcomes, with the overall goal of building a socially and culturally vibrant Dubuque.

SOCIAL + CULTURAL VIBRANCY QUICK POLL:

Q: How can Dubuque further social and cultural vibrancy?



78%

A: Displaying work by local artists adds value to the quality of life in Dubuque.

Among all respondents, 78% (49 of 63 Individuals) reported that they would like to see more work by local artists.



57%

A: Decentralized events such as neighborhood concerts or events throughout the City.

Among all respondents, 57% (36 of 64 Individuals) reported that they would like to see more decentralized events.



44%

A: Arts education in Dubuque schools is valuable to our children and community.

Among all respondents, 44% (28 of 64 Individuals) reported that they would like to see a more concentrated focus on art education in schools and the community.

Healthy Local Foods

Together with recreation opportunities, health and food systems make up an essential part of the “vibrancy infrastructure” in Dubuque. Food system issues of all types sparked strong interest and positive energy across the community – from the success of the Farmers’ Market, to a desire to see the City combat public health problems, to interest in how purchasing contracts could be re-evaluated to engage more local producers.

Building vibrancy requires Dubuque to build up and make connections among community health resources. Food is a unifier in Dubuque, providing a bridge for social and cultural engagement and supporting public health. Participants in the public workshops made connections and suggested areas of potential investment and planning across all aspects of Dubuque’s food system.

Desire for More Healthy, Accessible Options

Ironically, Iowa residents ranked dead last in the United States in the ‘2015 State of American Well Being’ on fruit and vegetable consumption. Despite this statistic, which leaves ample room for improvement, an interest in and support for local, healthy food is also one of the most important “uniters” for all Dubuque residents. Increased access to healthy food options is a specific area of improvement in the STAR Community Rating process, and brings together a variety of economic development, recreation, public health, and equity goals. Dubuque Eats Well and the Dubuque Community Garden Coalition are both doing excellent work to promote healthy local food choices. Continuing to enhance in-city food production, community resiliency, and eliminating food deserts are all vital to Dubuque’s future.

Dubuque Farmers’ Market

The Farmers’ Market was consistently cited as the single most open and welcoming place and activity for all residents, and the place where everyone regardless of neighborhood, race, or age felt both welcome and safe.



▲ Fresh flowers and locally grown vegetables on sale at the Dubuque Farmers’ Market.



“

“The Summer Farmers’ Market has been adding kids’ activities to draw families, and is adding a chef this year that will do demonstrations about buying and cooking with fresh produce. Their double-up food bucks program linked to SNAP has been very successful.”

“I saw a news segment of a small business in Florida that plants gardens instead of lawns in front of homes. The people who live there get a portion of the food and earnings from the sale of extra produce for the use of their land, and the business keeps the rest of the earnings from the sale of extra produce for the gardening work. Some of the surplus is sold at Farmers’ Markets and some is donated to food shelters. Would it be possible to implement something similar between Dubuque Leisure Services or the ISU extension office and public schools? Some of our schools have large amounts of unused land and the grounds are vacant during the summer growing months. Students could plant gardens in the spring, another local office could manage the garden after planting and over the summer months, and then in the fall students could help harvest. The food could be used in school meals, sold to families for fundraising, sold at the Farmers’ Market for profits, and donated to local food shelters.”

- Ideas shared via the project website and app.

”

Food Systems and Health





Residents Want Healthy Food Initiatives

Dubuquers noted many ways access to healthy food could be expanded in Dubuque:

- Workplace wellness programs
- Integrating healthy food at hospital facilities
- More community gardening opportunities
- Increase transit access to, and hours of, the Farmers' Market
- Partnerships with Iowa farmers
- Incentives and economic support for local healthy food outlets, especially in Food Desert areas

“

“More Edible Landscapes!”

“Local food/cooking in schools.”

“Strong farm-to-schools incentives.”

“Better/more variety of organic foods.”

“More small grocery stores and bodegas or delis, especially downtown to carry the basics/ pick up a sandwich, etc.”

“Walkable neighborhood-based grocery stores.”

- Ideas shared via the project website and at workshops.

”

▲ Increasing the abundance of healthy local foods was a major topic discussed via all community engagement mediums.

Food Security

Investments in food systems and food access can improve food security – having reliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious food. These actions have spatial, economic and social dimensions. The ‘Food Systems Map’ on the previous page shows the spatial relationship of Dubuque’s “food and health infrastructure” (i.e. community gardens, grocery stores, etc.) and their proximity to residential neighborhoods and the public transportation system.

In 2016, approximately 1 out of every 6 Dubuque households or 12%-17% were “food insecure” meaning members had anxiety over food sufficiency or shortage of food at least once a year.

Low food security households have disruptions in the quality and variety of food consumed, and very low food security households suffer disruption in the quantity and regularity of meals. Ensuring that Dubuque residents can get to supermarkets and other outlets with sufficient variety and reasonable costs is an issue not only for social service providers, but also for transit and transportation planning. Furthermore, it is an important basis for planning where investments in community gardens, such as those recently supported by Sustainable Dubuque Community Grants, should be prioritized.

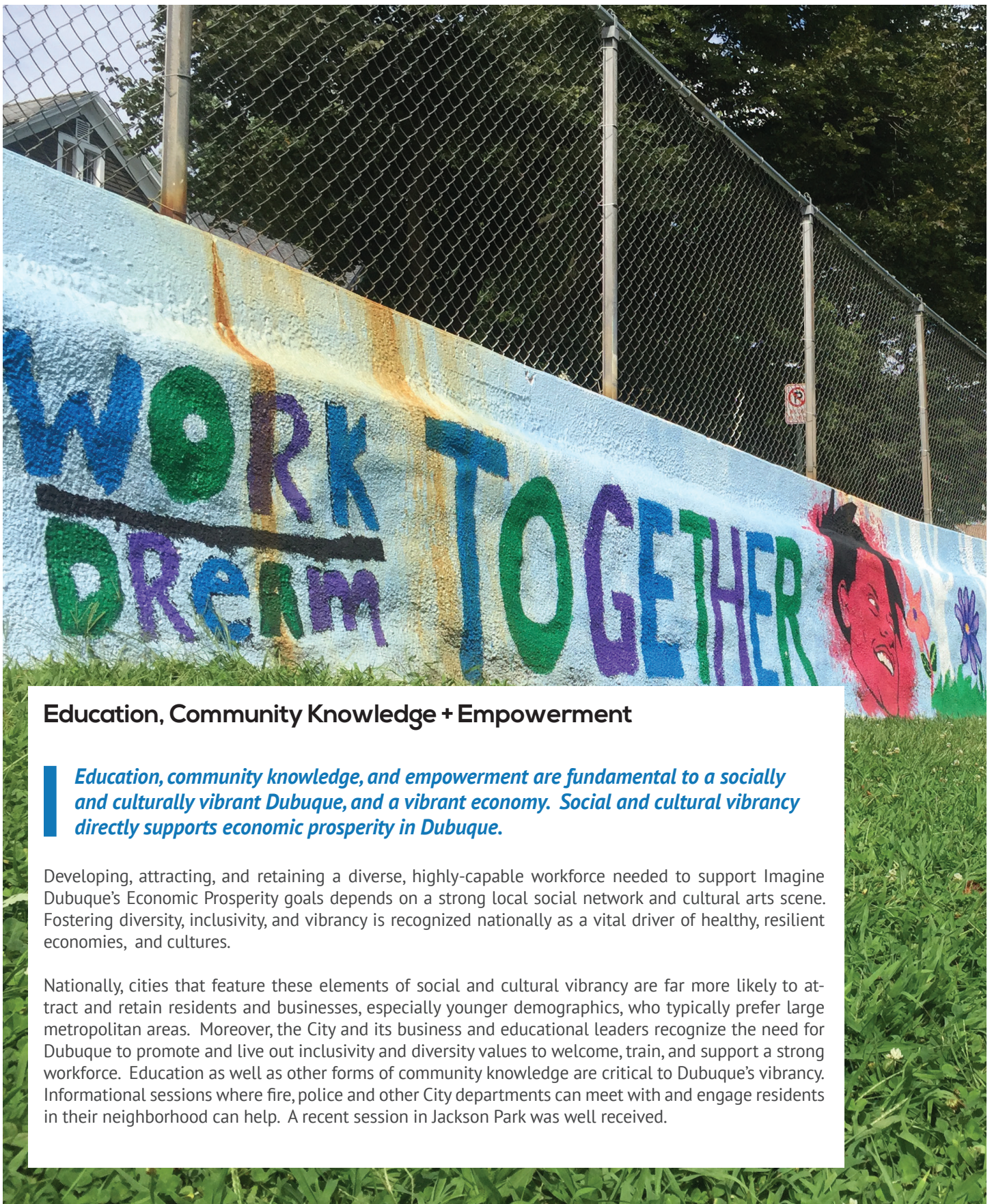
FOOD DESERTS

“I heard that the Flexsteel plant on Jackson Street is closing in the near future. Please consider converting the area into a small retail hub for the neighborhood. ALDI would be wonderful there, as well as Hartig or Walgreens. The nearest grocery stores are several minutes away and gas station food is not a healthy or affordable option for the neighborhood.”

LOCAL FOOD PRODUCTION

“The Convivium Urban Farm is an exciting concept just getting going that “will bring people together through food production, preparation, education and enjoyment.” They will offer classes in food preparation, food preservation, and growing. Part of their greenhouse will be used for hydroponic production and vertical farming. The hydroponic farming hopes to add fish in 4-5 years.”

- Ideas shared via the project website



Education, Community Knowledge + Empowerment

Education, community knowledge, and empowerment are fundamental to a socially and culturally vibrant Dubuque, and a vibrant economy. Social and cultural vibrancy directly supports economic prosperity in Dubuque.

Developing, attracting, and retaining a diverse, highly-capable workforce needed to support Imagine Dubuque's Economic Prosperity goals depends on a strong local social network and cultural arts scene. Fostering diversity, inclusivity, and vibrancy is recognized nationally as a vital driver of healthy, resilient economies, and cultures.

Nationally, cities that feature these elements of social and cultural vibrancy are far more likely to attract and retain residents and businesses, especially younger demographics, who typically prefer large metropolitan areas. Moreover, the City and its business and educational leaders recognize the need for Dubuque to promote and live out inclusivity and diversity values to welcome, train, and support a strong workforce. Education as well as other forms of community knowledge are critical to Dubuque's vibrancy. Informational sessions where fire, police and other City departments can meet with and engage residents in their neighborhood can help. A recent session in Jackson Park was well received.

Education

Beyond building on Dubuque's history of quality public education, and the presence of four colleges and two seminaries, vibrancy involves providing both opportunity for lifelong learning and development, and a system of education, communication, and support that empowers individuals to learn, lead, and better themselves and their communities.



High Educational Attainment

90% Completed High School

33% Received a Bachelors Degree or Higher

Comprehensive Approach

A vibrant Dubuque will weave together its formal public education system with its higher learning community, recreation programming, partnerships with faith- and interest-based organizations, and business partnerships to treat “education” both holistically and strategically. Quality learning opportunities will attract and support families, provide workforce training, and enhance Dubuque’s overall vibrancy.

School District Plans

The Dubuque Community School District employs 1,800 people and serves over 10,000 students in 18 schools and one Alternative Learning Center. Dubuque Community School District’s 2016-2017 Priority Initiatives particularly relevant to social and cultural vibrancy include:

- Focus collaboration with the juvenile court system/law enforcement to lower truancy rates and lessen the referrals of children under 18.
- Prepare for an “anytime, anywhere” digital learning environment in 2017-2018 that coincides with updated course objectives and delivery at the ninth-grade level.
- Develop a system to make data across the district more efficiently collected, more easily accessible and more usable to staff for instructional decision making, and more readily available to various stakeholders.

Measures of Success

Educational attainment and measures of education success in Dubuque exceed state and national averages. Over 90% of residents have completed high school and nearly one-third have a bachelor’s degree or higher. In an encouraging sign for the future, the percentage of the population with some college or a bachelor’s degree is higher for those 25 to 44 (an average of 23%) than those 45 to 64 (20%) and 65 and older (14%)².

Outreach Says

Participants in Imagine Dubuque were overall satisfied with the educational opportunities and quality available, including adult offerings through Northeast Iowa Community College, but did consistently cite a need for more affordable, quality child care resources.

Lifelong Learning

As lifelong learning is part of social and cultural vibrancy, education across the age spectrum is important to consider. The Keystone Area Education Agency (*highlighted below*) offers a clearinghouse for education resources in and around Dubuque from early childhood (including Iowa’s free preschool program for four-year-olds), through continuing education and professional training.

² Data from the 2016 American Community Survey reported on towncharts.com

□ Keystone Area Education Agency

Keystone Area Education Agency is dedicated to providing the children of Northeast Iowa with the best possible educational opportunities. Through its partnerships with local schools, teachers, and parents, Keystone Area Education Agencies will continue to provide services that put children first in Northeast Iowa. Area Education Agencies were established in 1974 to deliver equal support services to Iowa’s children and schools. Keystone Area Education Agencies provides quality services to 23 public school districts and 28 nonpublic schools, covering nearly 5,000-square-miles. Keystone Area Education Agencies serves eight counties in Northeast Iowa. These are: Allamakee, Chickasaw, Clayton, Delaware, Dubuque, Fayette, Howard and Winnebago.



Mission: To provide leadership for school improvement, student learning and living. This leadership is provided through equitable, effective, and efficient services to its districts, schools, and their patrons by working in school-community planning, professional development, curriculum instruction assessment, school leadership, school management, services for diverse learning, services for inclusive schools, instructional media, and school technology.

A focus area in education and learning that touches on several elements of social and cultural vibrancy centers on Dubuque's youngest residents.

Reading Level

In 2012, nearly 26% of Dubuque's third-grade students were not reading at grade level, a crucial metric for future success and educational attainment. The Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque and Every Child/Every Promise formed the 'Campaign for Grade-Level Reading' to improve summer learning, school readiness, and attendance. This led to actions including improved data collection, improved summer learning opportunities, a mobile vision clinic providing exams and glasses to children, and an early education partnership with Northeast Iowa Community College. With all of these efforts, grade level reading challenges still exist. The Community Solutions Action Plan is due to be updated in 2017; its actions and recommendations should be considered as part and parcel of Imagine Dubuque's goals for social and cultural vibrancy.

Arts Education

Imagine Dubuque has highlighted the need for vigilant support for the quantity and quality of arts education within Dubuque's schools and the community at large. **Imagine Dubuque participants expressed the strongest possible support for arts education within Dubuque schools.**

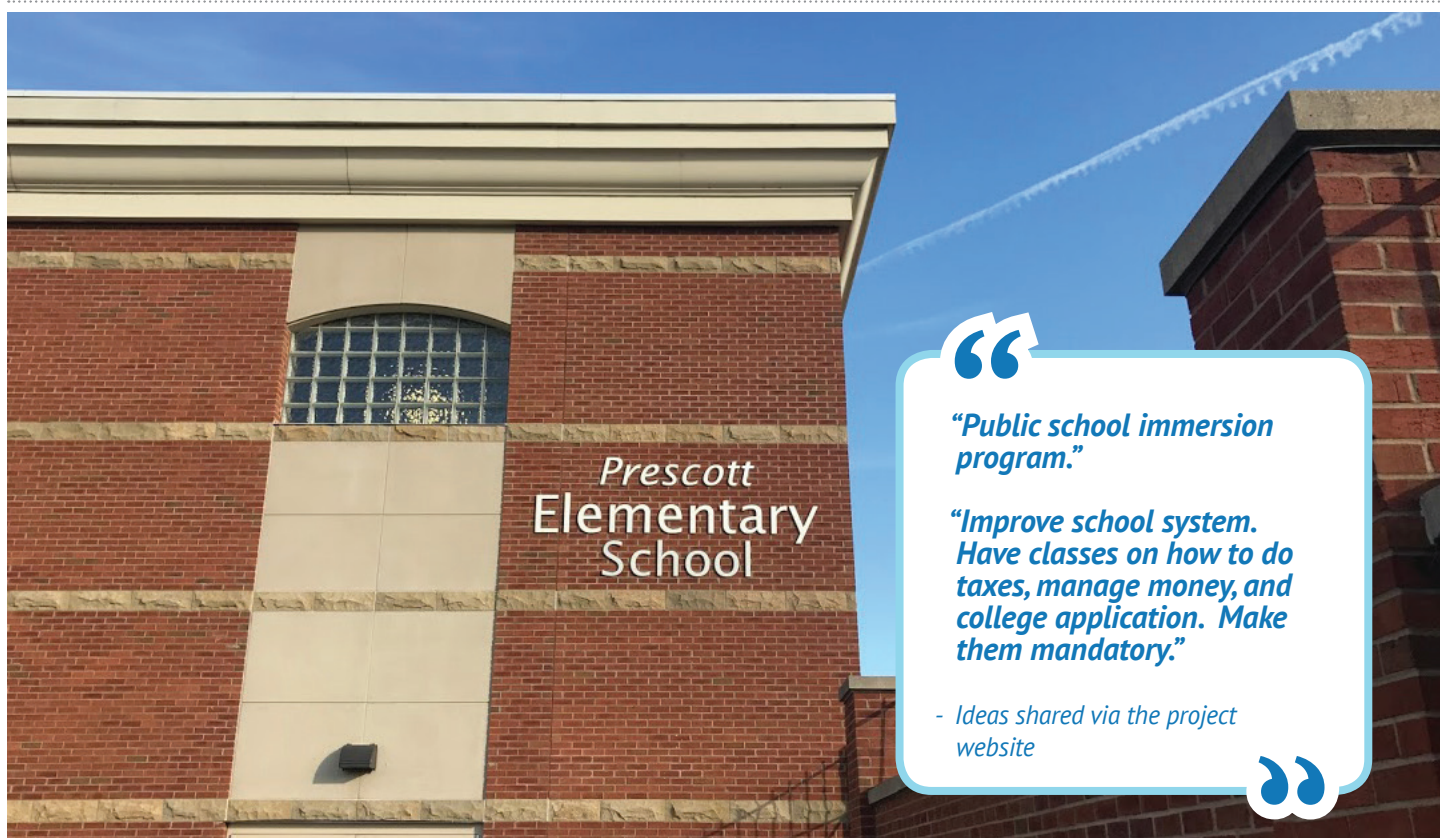
Dubuque Community School District showcases its arts offerings via the 'Digital Fringe', an online gallery of student art initiated to *"highlight the remarkable products of art education in the district."* In-school arts education offers one of the most effective ways to expand the sense of culture in Dubuque via new, and culturally diverse forms of art.

On June 16, 2017, Dubuque received a prestigious second All-America City Award from the Campaign for Grade Level Reading and the National Civic League for its civic engagement around reading proficiency; a strong affirmation of the value of the City's focus on education as an important component of a viable, livable, and equitable community.



DUBUQUE RECEIVES 2012 AND 2017
ALL-AMERICA CITY AWARD

The Campaign for
GRADE-LEVEL
READING



"Public school immersion program."

"Improve school system. Have classes on how to do taxes, manage money, and college application. Make them mandatory."

- Ideas shared via the project website



▲ Prescott Elementary, Dubuque, Iowa

Community Knowledge + Empowerment

Community empowerment, distinct from education, is defined by the World Health Organization as “the process of enabling communities to increase control over their lives.”

Organizations and partnerships in Dubuque work on many aspects of this goal, including violence prevention, youth engagement, and environmental quality. Actively acknowledging the importance of these actions and their relationship to building and maintaining an inclusive, vibrant community is, in and of itself, a goal of Imagine Dubuque.

Knowledge and empowerment is a pillar of Inclusive Dubuque, incorporating five programs discussed in this chapter: Project HOPE (Helping Our People Excel); Heart Youthbuild; the Multicultural Family Center; Every Child/Every Promise; and Green Vision Schools.

While some engagement in community knowledge and empowerment is long-standing and addresses general needs, other partnerships such as the Coalition for Non-Violence come together around specific issues.

Participants in Imagine Dubuque noted the breadth of participation in different community empowerment programs and partnerships, such as the Multicultural Family Center and Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque.

The City and immediate region are home to 40 to 50 non-profits active in community empowerment and knowledge, including five orders of Catholic sisters. In an Imagine Dubuque discussion with the Coalition for Non-Violence, one participant summed up the depth of participation and commitment in community empowerment by saying, “If any place in the Country can have zero violence, it’s Dubuque, Iowa.”

“If any place in the Country can have zero violence, it’s Dubuque, Iowa.”

- Participant at the Coalition for Non-Violence Focus Group

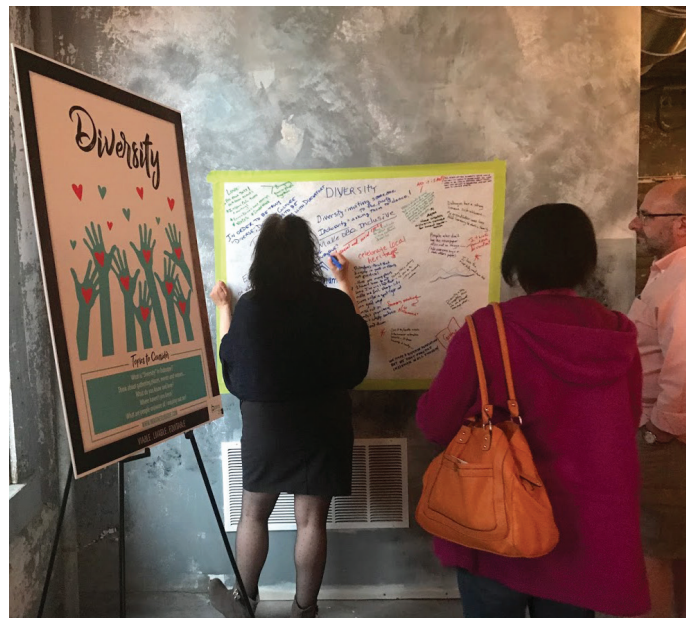
Diversity + Inclusion

Leadership in Dubuque has recognized and made a strong point of the vital importance of multi-pronged and ongoing training, investments, and partnerships that will make an increasingly diverse, equitable, and inclusive city where all are successfully engaged in civic and economic life.

In general, public input supported the feeling that the City is actively promoting inclusivity in public safety, public spending on arts and culture, and that this is a valid, important use of public resources.

“Use arts and cultural programs to connect people across divisions of socio-economic status, race, religion, age, etc. Arts is a universal language – use it intentionally to bring people together.”

- Idea shared at the Social and Cultural Vibrancy Workshop



▲ Residents and business owners share ideas related to diversity at the Imagine Dubuque Social + Cultural Vibrancy Workshop on April 19th, 2017

Diversity + Inclusion Continued...

Further Inclusivity

Active and explicit City policies, such as the recent proclamation of Dubuque as “A City of Welcome and Opportunity,” and support for non-profits such as the Multicultural Family Center, reflect the importance of building inclusivity into the fiber of the City’s housing, economy, education, recreation, and infrastructure. The City’s formal focus and turning towards inclusivity and diversity has paid tangible dividends.

- **Translation Services:** Strategies such as translation and other assistance for non-English speaking residents was suggested during the Imagine Dubuque campaign.
- **Multicultural Family Center:** In the Quickpoll, Multicultural Family Center events were specifically cited as welcoming and engaging; bringing the community together.

Safety Plays a Key Role

Public safety and law enforcement are a critical component of a truly inclusive community. The City and Dubuque Police Department have made significant investments in law enforcement and human rights. Dubuque leadership is visibly committed to equity and communication. Both the Chief of Police and the Human Rights Director are authorized Equity and Inclusion Liaisons to the City Manager, with a specific responsibility to:

“...serve as a point of contact providing safe support for underrepresented community members who have questions and concerns about equity and inclusion in local government. The liaisons are available to all underrepresented communities, including racial and ethnic minority communities, the LGBTQ community, and immigrants and refugees. The goal of these liaisons is to foster relationships of mutual trust and confidence in fair and professional governance, and to elevate concerns to the City Manager and officials.”

Focus on Recreation

Public recreation investments are a prime means for building inclusion through programming, community activity, and space.

Construction of a community center with indoor aquatics, and renovation and re-programming of park spaces, both were cited throughout the public engagement process as badly needed, and a means to enhance equity and connections among Dubuque residents.

The ability of a City to use recreation investments as equity enhancers has been demonstrated in cities from South Hadley, Massachusetts to New York City. Playground and park enhancements, as well as lighting, can be targeted for updates that create safe, accessible spaces attracting people from well beyond the immediate neighborhood. Keeping an “equity eye” in the siting, planning and design of these investments will benefit Dubuque.



“All I want for everybody is fair play and equity regardless of race, color or creed, whatever, economic status. Just treat people fair, as you like to be treated.” - Ruby Sutton. Ruby Sutton did more than just speak these words... she lived them every day of her life as a tireless champion for human rights, justice and diversity. - Source: Multicultural Family Center website

Celebrate Our Residents

Veterans memorials, exhibits and storytelling events, and naming of parks and public buildings are all ways that we can celebrate the good works and actions of our residents. These efforts help tell the story of who we are as a community. Close coordination with veteran groups and other non-profit organizations is essential in identifying opportunities to recognize and honor the past and maintaining existing memorials.

☐ Dubuque Police Department Principles



- **Act with integrity.** The authority vested in us demands we act impartially, honestly, fairly, and courageously, adhering to legal rules and ethical standards.
- **Act with compassion.** We believe that each person is entitled to our respect and sensitivity. We resolve to maintain our ability to feel empathy and to seek understanding and acceptance for everyone.
- **Act with competence.** As law enforcement professionals we strive for the highest standards of effectiveness, efficiency, accuracy, and objectivity. It is our goal to actively seek out and respond to those situations where legal authority is potentially needed or where immediate action is required.
- **Act with open minds.** Through listening, learning, growth, we always seek enhancement and cooperation with others who serve the community. Through partnerships we seek to provide a comprehensive approach for effective law enforcement. Each member of the Dubuque Police Department makes an important contribution to our success. Respect for each other and ourselves provides the unity to enable us to improve community livability.



▲ Historic window fenestrations compliment this facade mural in Downtown Dubuque that boasts bright, earthy colors.

Arts + Entertainment

Throughout the outreach process, Dubuque residents pointed to an abundance of opportunities to both engage in and enjoy artistic, cultural, and entertainment offerings year-round, throughout the City. Dubuque is home to many festivals and events, universally cited as one of the best aspects of the City. A continuous offering of cultural and arts events at local universities compliments the public festivals and events.

Dubuque residents see several opportunities and challenges for improving overall social and cultural vibrancy.

- 1 Expanding the idea of what “culture” means beyond the traditional views and habits of Dubuque residents.
- 2 Finding a way to increase publicity and awareness of cultural and artistic offerings, which will help build a collective sense of vibrancy in Dubuque.
- 3 Using policy and collaboration to overcome some of the mobility, access, and educational or communication barriers that might prevent residents from engaging more fully in the City’s cultural and artistic life.



ABOUT JDIFF

The Julien Dubuque International Film Festival is dedicated to enriching the community and bridging cultures through the education and promotion of the arts through independent film.

Dubuque has a strong and well-publicized base of arts and culture offerings through its major institutions, local colleges, and universities. The **Julien Dubuque International Film Festival** annually attracts over 4,000 attendees and was cited in the public engagement process as an “overlooked treasure” of the city’s arts scene.

□ What does “culture” mean in practice?

Participants in the Social and Cultural Vibrancy Working Group looked at five aspects of inclusion in Dubuque’s cultural life that can be addressed in part through transportation, communication, public safety, and recreation programming. Some of their answers are displayed via the MindMap facilitation graphics located directly to the right of the questions below.

Mobility: Can I get places that I want to go? If I am driving, is parking reasonably available?

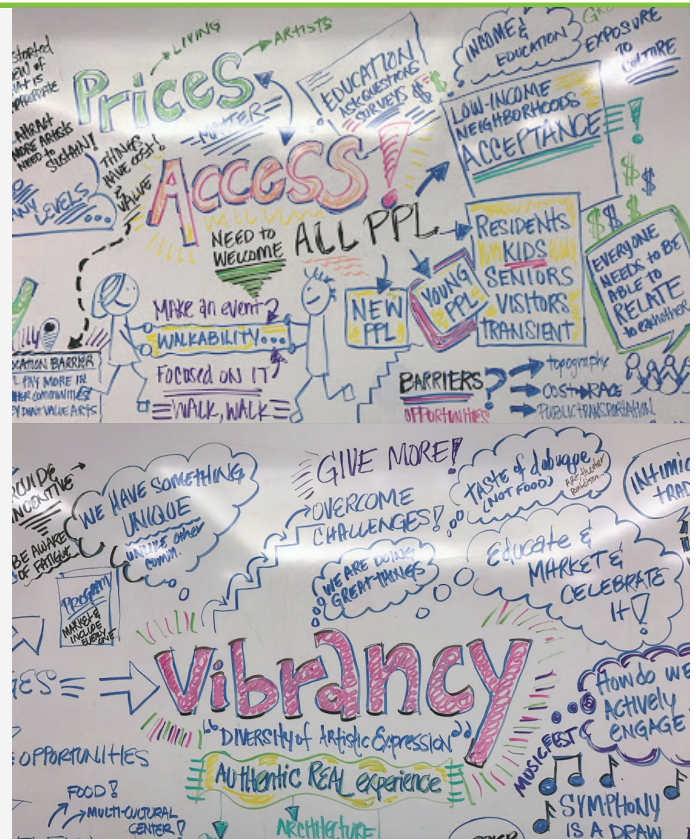
Relatability: Will people and events be accessible to me, given my experience, language, culture?

Access: How much does it cost to participate fully?

Education: How much educational attainment is needed to participate in a meaningful way?

Fear: Am I going to be physically and socially comfortable in the environment or at the event?

Culture: Do I value events that may not be what I have always considered to be “culture”?



Facilities and Programming

The Dubuque Museum of Art, Bell Tower Theater, Grand Opera House, and National Mississippi River Museum and Aquarium are high-visibility focal points for arts and cultural offerings. The Grand Opera House hosts plays, musicals, and concerts throughout the year. Cultural and arts programming at Clarke University (Arts @ Clarke) and the University of Dubuque’s Heritage Center provide year-round music, dance, theater, fine art and lecture events.

Several facilities within Dubuque host sports and arts events: The Grand River Center hosts many conventions and larger events and the Mystique Community Ice Center is home to the Dubuque Fighting Saints of the United States Hockey League. The historic Five Flags Theater and Center hosts cultural events including symphony, music, and theater while the Civic Center provides a venue for larger concerts, and other types of entertainment and events. The Diamond Jo Casino and Q Casino on the river also are part of the entertainment offering in Dubuque, drawing travellers from throughout the region and offering music and entertainment events as well as gaming.

- **Expand Transit:** While these facilities are all generally located along or near Jule transit routes, some concern was expressed regarding transit availability to access social and cultural events during week nights and on the weekends when most events occur.






Community-Based Events

Beyond these more conventional events, most of which are not free to the community, Dubuque is home to an increasing number of galleries and community-based events that also add to the overall sense of vibrancy and provide a more inclusive set of opportunities. Travel Dubuque, for example, highlights galleries, festivals and restaurants, including Art on the River and the Dubuque Area Arts Collective, that provide alternatives to formal, ticketed events.

- **Focus on Geography:** The need to expand these types of alternatives, as well as looking at ways to expand offerings geographically and “come to the neighborhoods,” was stressed throughout the public engagement process.
Example: Music in Jackson Park!
- **Price Matters:** The most important focus for arts and culture in Imagine Dubuque was where the community can enhance the range and distribution of lower- or no-cost offerings, and support different types of experiences beyond the conventional offerings that are readily available.

Cultural Event Locations

Event Spaces

-  Municipal
-  Institutional
-  Commercial
-  Non-Profit
-  Parks





“More event/activities that anyone and everyone could attend.”

“Some kind of event to bring kids/ young adults together.”

“Schools should host a monthly dance event for teens with a different style of dance each month (i.e. disco, swing).”

- Ideas shared via the project website and at the High School Focus Group

▲ Dubuque Museum of Art.

Multi-Cultural Inclusivity

With respect to diversity, vibrancy and inclusion, there appears to be an important role for the City and its inclusion/diversity partners in education and communication around multi-cultural events. Throughout the public process participants acknowledged there has been a traditional idea of what “culture” is in Dubuque that is now changing, and sometimes challenged by new and different art forms. Dubuque residents expressed that the city’s history and long traditions pose challenges for creating cross-cultural attendance at public events such as “Juneteenth” celebrations of the end of slavery in the United States.

- **Communications:** Residents expressed a strong interest in information on “how to” recognize and respectfully participate in events, which may need to be a communications focus for the City, Inclusive Dubuque, and their many partners.

Branding

An interesting finding emerged from Imagine Dubuque that may argue for “branding,” or at least specifically identifying, actions in Dubuque connected to social and cultural vibrancy. Concerts and festivals, the Farmers’ Market, international student exchange, public safety outreach, and recreation enhancements all contribute to a vibrant Dubuque.

- **Positive Synergy:** Participants in Imagine Dubuque’s engagement events believe that vibrancy is on the rise in Dubuque; through planning and implementation, these positive impulses can be synergized in many beneficial ways.

VOICES OF DUBUQUE

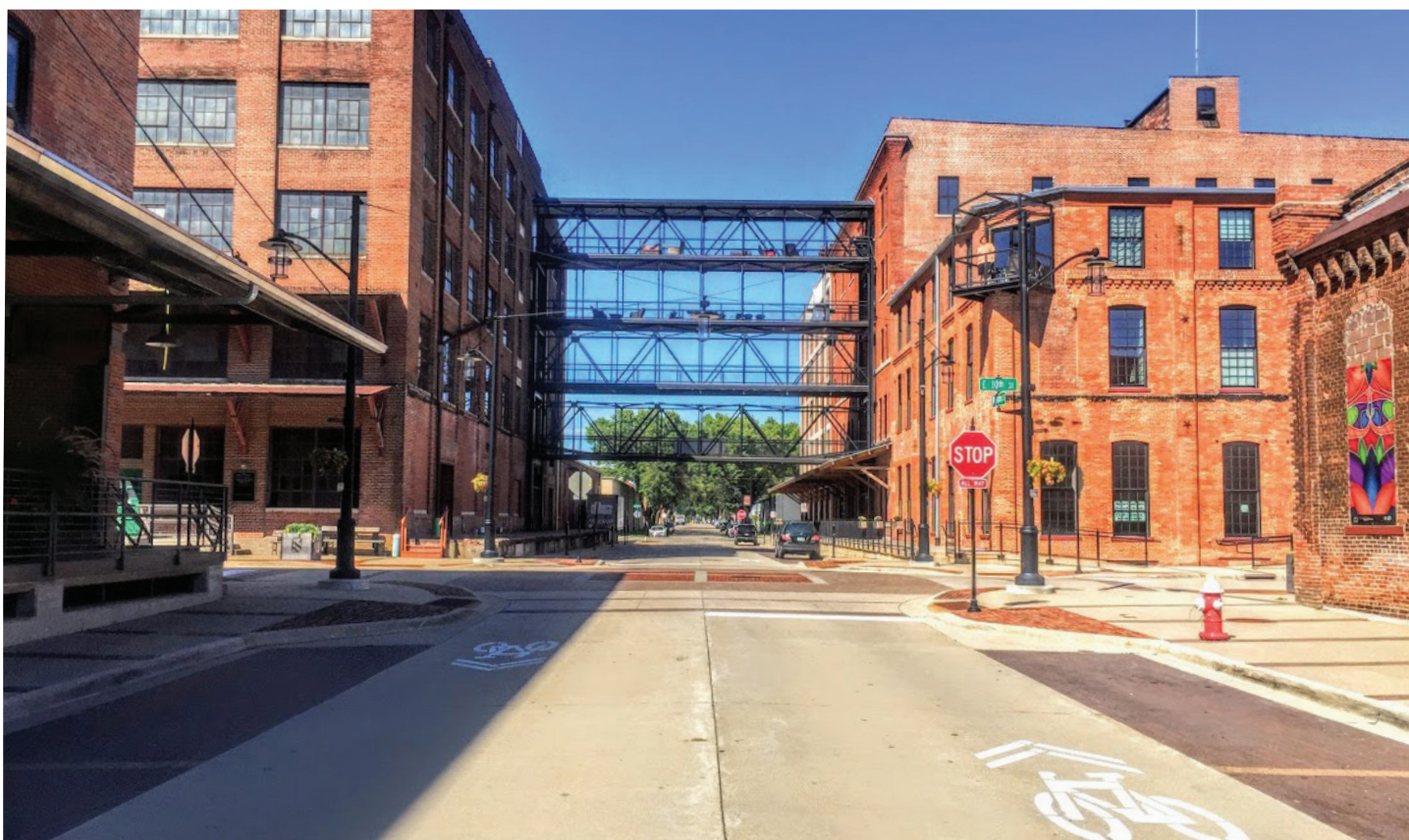
“My vision is for Dubuque to be known world-wide as a city where there is love, happiness, peace, equality, inclusivity, prosperity and well-being for all. To help cultivate this vision, Dubuque could host an annual three-day weekend celebration of love, peace and unity that features musicians that play music and lead interactive experiences designed to inspire connection, love and respect and joy. The festival also would include activities such as yoga, meditation, presentations and group activities led by living luminaries, and delicious and nutritious healthy food and beverage (non-alcoholic) options for a transformational experience unlike anything else on the planet.”

“More youth involvement in community events focused on the arts and music.”

“I would like to see more African-American, Afro-Cuban, Marshallese, Mediterranean and other diversified Artists, events, expos and festivals that aren’t specifically narrowed to hip-hop and R&B/Funk reviews of music or being showcased as being helped out of dire straits. My vision for Dubuque is to know that our youth can be included and not displayed as being needy.”

“Club with dance emphasis; diverse music venues.”

- Ideas shared via the project website and app.



▲ Historic warehouses in the Millwork District have been preserved and transformed into mixed-use, attracting both residential and commercial uses to successfully activate the area.

Green Buildings + Historic Preservation

Green buildings and certification are one but not the only aspect of 'preservation culture' in Dubuque. As the Sustainable Dubuque website notes, "Dubuque's strong historic preservation history means that many other building managers are creating green buildings using other best practices."

Indeed the city's historic preservation strategies are "green building;" in the words of architect and historic preservationist Jane Powell, "The greenest building is the one that's already built." Dubuque's civic habit of preservation, and the adaptive re-use of historic structures, is an important means of reducing waste, conserving raw materials, and adding vitality as the City develops and changes.

For this and many other reasons, the historic preservation movement nationally has a new vision for the future. This vision is centered on people, communities, and how historic preservation will emerge as real and integrated heritage preservation, recognizing the diversity of local stories, their equal importance as part of the nation's story, and how historic buildings and areas can support the greater story.

For Dubuque, this vision equates to the City's goals of viability, livability, and equity. Considering historic places as community assets fosters stable neighborhoods and economic vitality and empowers residents.

Dubuque's historic preservation ethic remains strong and exemplifies the broader movement's emerging vision. The City and its many constituencies recognize the importance of Dubuque's story to the city's economic, social, and cultural vitality. Local preservation programming encompasses not only the work of Dubuque's Historic Preservation Commission and City staff, but also the combined efforts of multiple local private, public, and institutional partners.

Preservation Partners

Among the City's established partners are Dubuque Main Street, Heritage Works, Old House Enthusiasts, Four Mounds Foundation (at Four Mounds, a City-own local landmark and National Register property), and Loras College's Center for Dubuque History. At the municipal level, multiple City departments—planning, economic development, leisure services, and housing—are engaged in work supporting the City's historic preservation programming.

In addition to these many local government efforts, the City's historic preservation program has partnerships with Dubuque County, Dubuque County Historical Society, statewide preservation advocacy groups, Iowa's state historic preservation office, and national preservation organizations, including the National Trust for Historic Preservation and their Preservation Green Lab, and National Association of Preservation Commissions.

The City currently recognizes the importance of local properties through individual local landmark designations and locally designated historic and conservation districts. In addition to local designations, many of these same properties are included in Dubuque's 17 National Register districts, three Archaeological district listings, and 44 individual listings in the National Register of Historic Places.



Historic Preservation by the Numbers

44 National Register Listings **17** National Register Districts **3** Archaeological District Listings



The Historic Preservation Commission has actively conducted surveys of over 5,600 of the city's resources, nominated individual properties and districts, and received three Certified Local Government grants to support survey work since 2013. Historic Preservation Commission also promotes the benefits of historic preservation to the broader Dubuque community.

Preservation Programs

Dubuque's many local preservation partners are engaged in varied aspects of preserving the community's historic, architectural, archaeological, and cultural resources. The City and its partners have developed several unique programs. Examples include:

Housing Education and Rehabilitation Training (HEART): This initiative provides training in the building trades for at-risk high school students. To help measure success and outcomes, the initiative includes graduation rates for students within their annual report. Partners include the City, Dubuque Community School District, Northeast Iowa Community College, Four Mounds Foundation, Dupaco Community Credit Union, and Four Oaks of Iowa. HEART trainees have worked to repair/restore varied historic and vintage structures, including homes in Dubuque's Washington neighborhood. Many of these homes are intended for first time homebuyers, including those eligible for City housing incentives. Many HEART trainees have gone onto successful careers in the building trades.

Dubuque Main Street: In tandem with the City's economic development department, Dubuque Main Street works on key preservation initiatives to promote growth in downtown's 10 neighborhoods. Currents efforts are focused on the Washington neighborhood, providing important linkages to the City's housing and economic development initiatives. Dubuque Main Street's Architecture Days, promoting Dubuque's history and architecture and educating the public about historic preservation's importance to the downtown and regional economy, is one of downtown's most important annual events.

Financing

Despite Dubuque's historic preservation successes, the financing mechanisms that have contributed to these same successes face challenges. The continuation of federal historic and New Markets tax credits remains in doubt as Congress considers tax reform. Iowa's state historic preservation tax credit percentage may be reduced to 15% from 25%. For Dubuque's larger rehabilitations, particularly downtown, the elimination or reduction of these credits will negatively affect future redevelopment, employment, and economic development efforts. Federal community development and housing funding is also threatened.

Ongoing Education

With Historic Preservation Commission's 2014 transition away from a design review focus, much of their work now emphasizes education about historic preservation and its benefits to the Dubuque community. Additional emphasis on the tangible benefits, particularly the economic impact, of historic preservation to the city's residents, investors, and visitors should be the logical next step for HPC study, work, and ongoing education.



▲ Ideas shared regarding Community Safety at the Social and Cultural Vibrancy Workshop on April 19th, 2017.

Community Safety

Ensuring all residents are safe in their homes, workplaces, schools, and community gathering spaces is essential to a socially and culturally vibrant Dubuque.

Communication and collaboration among neighbors and organizations, especially to address and resolve conflict, is essential to creating a sense of safety where diversity, expression, and opportunity can thrive. Public safety and policing are also fundamental. Throughout the public engagement process participants in Imagine Dubuque all described “safety” as the ability to move throughout the city whenever and however one chose without fear or concern. This is a high bar, and speaks to the city’s relative safety.

In nearly all measures of public safety (i.e. violent crime, property crime) the City of Dubuque is at or below average rates for Iowa and the United States. In 2015 there were 1.79 law enforcement officers per 1,000 residents, slightly above the average of 1.70 in Iowa.³

³ Data from <http://www.city-data.com/crime/crime-Dubuque-Iowa.html>

However, individual perceptions of safety in public settings and neighborhoods vary from resident to resident. Responses in the Quick Poll and public workshop indicated that public safety perceptions, particularly regarding Downtown Dubuque, often limit the willingness of residents to attend cultural activities or businesses that are otherwise appealing to them.

Some participants also conceded that perceived “safety” in some cases meant not encountering unfamiliar people or situations, which relates again to the overall need to continue Dubuque’s strong emphasis on welcoming, communication, and inclusion.

Building neighborhood pride can also enhance community-safety in seemingly subtle ways, such as efforts to clean-up litter and utilize available trash receptacles. Neighborhood-based clean-up days, educational efforts, and residents taking ownership of their neighborhood are all important to help enhance the appearance and safety of Dubuque.



▲ Washington Park Neighborhood Branded Trash Receptacle



▲ Ideas shared regarding Community Safety at the Equity Workshop on June 27th, 2017.

□ Improving Perceptions of Community Safety

In the public engagement process, residents offered suggestions that could enhance the sense of safety, particularly in Downtown Dubuque:



- Increased lighting
- More frequent trash pick-ups
- Completing sidewalks along JFK Rd and Dodge St
- Partnerships with neighborhood associations to increase communication

“

“The Broadway Neighborhood could benefit from some old fashioned city lights to enhance the beauty of walking and getting to know neighbors. Visible cameras would increase safety.”

“Change people’s perception of Downtown.”

“Clean-up the City, clean-up litter.”

“Know your neighbors! The City provides money for inclusive events. Do people know this? How can we take better advantage?”

- Ideas shared at Imagine Dubuque Equity Workshop on June 27th, 2017

”

Health + Human Services

Reflecting its strong community spirit and heritage, Dubuque overall is a place that scores high on many indicators of public and human health, as well as the availability of public and community-based services for individuals and families.

Community Awareness

Past surveys and research as part of Inclusive Dubuque, as well as feedback as part of Imagine Dubuque, all showed a strong awareness of the types of public health threats on the horizon and the importance of access to a spectrum of health care – most notably for mental health, along with family services, addiction treatment, and continuing care – to a vibrant and healthy community.

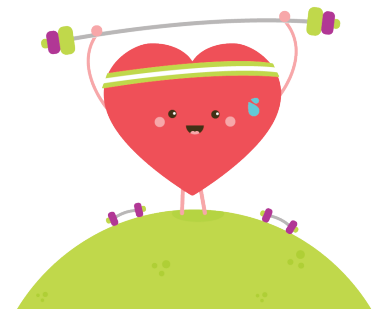
On the Road to “Very Healthy”

Relative to other Iowa communities, and certainly when compared to the US as a whole, Dubuque County has a relatively strong public health profile. Dubuque, in short, is seeking to go from healthy to “very healthy” in its efforts around health, recreation, food systems, and housing quality.

Peer Counties

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention publishes Community Health Status Indicators assessing how counties with similar population characteristics, economic profiles including unemployment rates and home values, age distributions, and percentages of foreign-born individuals compare to Dubuque.

Relative to its peers, Dubuque County is in the “most favorable” quartile for 15 of the 43 factors, the middle quartiles for 22 factors, and the “least favorable” bottom quartile for six. This is comparable to adjacent Jo Daviess County in Illinois and Grant County, Wisconsin, though somewhat less healthy than Linn County around Cedar Rapids which has only two “least favorable” indicators. See figure 5.1 on the following page.



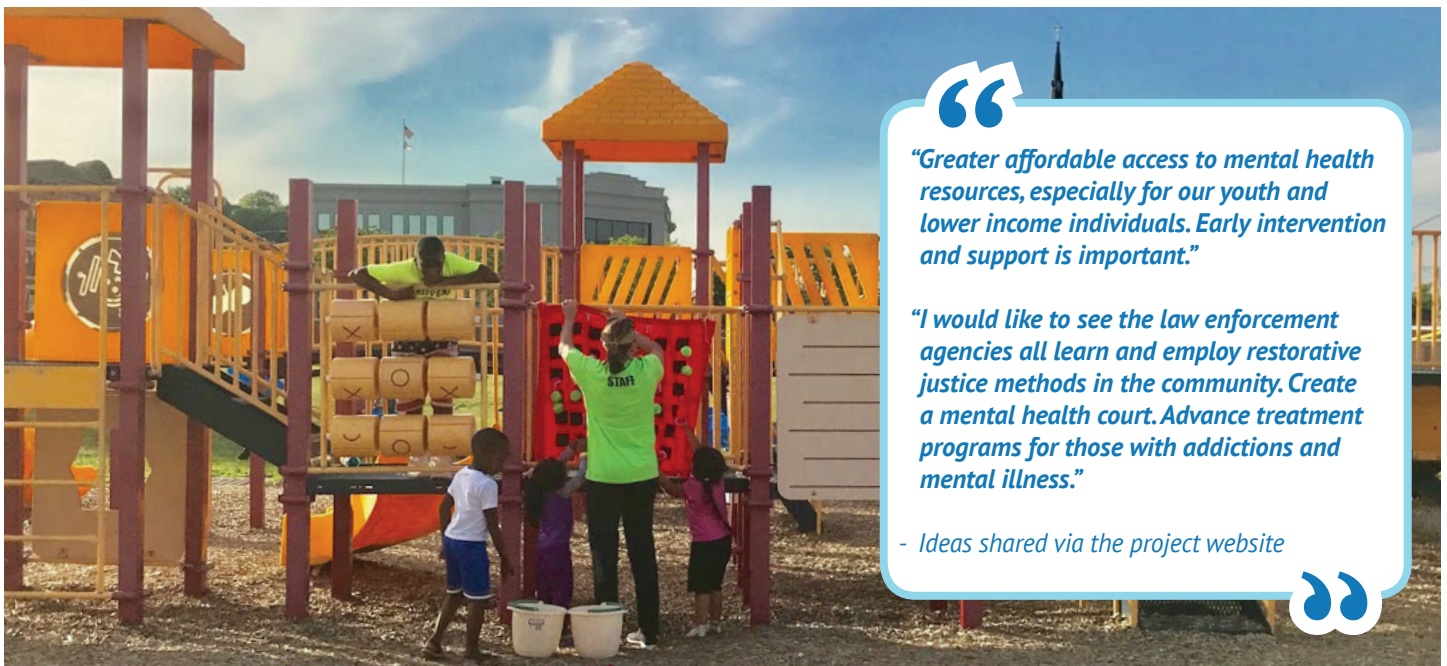
Dubuque County Health Meter

9.7%

OR 1 out of every 10 Dubuque County adults report having fair or poor health



Notably, only 9.7% of Dubuque County adults report having “fair or poor” health compared to 16.5% nationally, placing Dubuque County in the top third of Iowa counties and well ahead of the U.S. for this important measure of health.



“Greater affordable access to mental health resources, especially for our youth and lower income individuals. Early intervention and support is important.”

“I would like to see the law enforcement agencies all learn and employ restorative justice methods in the community. Create a mental health court. Advance treatment programs for those with addictions and mental illness.”

- Ideas shared via the project website



▲ Get active! Get outside! | Children attending the Imagine Dubuque Equity Workshop played outside for the duration of the evening.

■ FIGURE 5.1

□ Dubuque County Health Status Assessment Health Comparison to Peer Counties

Indicators	Dubuque is Better (most favorable quartile)	Dubuque is About the Same (middle two quartiles)	Dubuque is Worse (least favorable quartile)
Mortality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chronic kidney disease deaths • Diabetes deaths • Motor vehicle deaths • Unintentional injury 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alzheimer's disease deaths • Cancer deaths • Chronic lower respiratory disease deaths • Female life expectancy • Male life expectancy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coronary heart disease deaths • Stroke deaths
Morbidity (Incidence)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult diabetes • Adult overall health status • Older adult asthma • Older adult depression • Syphilis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult obesity • Alzheimer's diseases/dementia • HIV • Pre-term births 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cancer • Gonorrhea
Health Care Access & Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost barrier to care • Uninsured 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Older adult preventable hospitalizations • Primary care provider access 	
Health Behaviors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult female routine pap tests • Adult smoking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult physical inactivity • Teen births 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult binge drinking
Social Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On time high school graduation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children in single-parent households • High housing costs • Inadequate social support • Poverty • Unemployment • Violent crime 	
Physical Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing stress 		



SOCIAL + CULTURAL VIBRANCY QUICK POLL

Top Priorities: Access to Mental Health, Reducing Obesity and Encouraging Active Lifestyles

71%



Access to mental health care and reducing obesity and encouraging active lifestyles were the top local health issues identified by quick poll respondents.

Mental Health

The impact of addiction, particularly opioid addiction, was on the minds of many in leadership and the public in preparing Imagine Dubuque. Iowa as a state has the fifth-lowest death rate from opioid overdoses in the United States (10.3 per 100,000 in 2015); but while Dubuque's age-adjusted 2015 death rate from overdoses of 8 per 100,000 was below the state average, there were 23 deaths between 2013 and 2015. In an engaged and caring community, this impact goes beyond numbers. Partnerships and resources for prevention, treatment, and response for all kinds of addiction, and follow-up support services, were cited as a vital area of public focus and concern for the city's health, economy, safety, and well-being.

Mental health, including the availability of services and the pressing need for more and different solutions to the many aspects of managing mental health impacts in Dubuque – was the one area consistently cited as a need in all Imagine Dubuque outreach efforts. Inclusive Dubuque noted that, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Dubuque County is designated as a 'Health Professional Shortage Area' for mental health providers, and the need for these services cuts across all income and demographic groups.

Resident Call-For-Action

Participants in Imagine Dubuque and City staff were particularly vocal about improving mental health services.

- Many residents offered creative approaches, such as community-based support groups for people dealing with depression.
- Others noted the importance of having public conversations about the community impacts of mental health to reduce its stigma, and encourage more people to seek support.
- Dubuque Police Department staff noted the need for training on best practices for dealing with mental health issues in the context of public safety.
- Promoting the efforts of the Dubuque Police Department to deal with the many impacts of mental health on Dubuque's residents, was cited by many participants.

Making mental health an explicit component of public health and wellness activities, recreation opportunities, and non-profit organization programs, is likely to have strong support in the community and will achieve many benefits.



Photo “Wants”
Shared by Residents



“Paved bike trails that connect all parts of the city and beyond (the long-talked about trail from Bergfeld to the Mines of Spain along Catfish Creek would be a game changer!). Dubuque is so far behind the IC/CR corridor and Des Moines and Waterloo/CF and Madison with regards to trails! Building mountain bike trails (the Cloie Creek trail will be a good start) like what Duluth is doing would be hugely attractive to young, active families and professionals.”

- Photo and idea shared via the project website

▲ Idea shared at the Imagine Dubuque Pop-Up Farmers' Market Booth called for 'Mountain Biking Trails' -- an idea that was shared numerous times via the in-person and online idea tools. The photos at right were uploaded via the project website and app.

Recreation

Many of the concrete and specific solutions for physical and programmatic enhancements to social and cultural vibrancy fall squarely on the shoulders of the community's public, institutional, and private recreation providers.

A vibrant city today, as reinforced repeatedly in the public outreach and in an array of planning literature and studies, is a city with walkable and bikable four-season recreation opportunities where it is easy and safe to be physically active, connected to open and green spaces, and to leave cars behind. Municipal recreation programming, among the more flexible and 'agile' areas of municipal operations, also can be an area of great opportunity to address needs for activities, education, services, and community connection in a changing city like Dubuque. An excellent example of this type of policy is the Rec & Roll mobile playground recently launched by the City's Leisure Services Department, which brings this type of programming into underserved neighborhoods without costly investments in permanent structures.



▲ Leisure Services Rec & Roll Playground

Dubuquers Want a Community Wellness Center

With its aging park resources, committed leadership, and community partnerships, the City can improve its recreation systems with a social and cultural vibrancy focus. Enhanced recreation opportunities – including indoor and outdoor aquatic facilities ranging from splash pads in parks to an indoor swimming pool – were cited by participants in all the workshops and public engagement for Imagine Dubuque as perhaps the principal way the city itself enhance nearly every aspect of social and cultural vibrancy, from equity, public health and public safety to arts and culture and workforce recruitment.

A community wellness center, either municipally sponsored or in partnership with area recreation agencies and health providers, is notable for its importance to equity and community cohesion, as highlighted in many recent national studies and publications. Many, such as the Lawndale Community Center in Chicago, have integrated health education and health care into the same physical facility with recreation and multi-purpose space. The creation of an affordable wellness and recreation center that takes a holistic approach to health needs and preferences would be a significant “win” for Dubuque. It would respond to and address multiple factors including changing and aging demographics, challenges specific to health care costs/access, and resident needs and desires as expressed during outreach.



▲ Idea post-it shared via the Mobile Idea Board, chalkboard comment at the Dubuque and All That Jazz Idea Booth, and written workshop idea.

Additional Recreation Investments

- **Indoor Event Flex Space:** As noted several times, accessible, affordable and flexible indoor space for different gatherings is needed, along with effective communication to accommodate or modify different groups’ needs, traditions, and practices. Participants in the public outreach process noted specific needs for a large, low cost space where residents can hold birthday parties and celebrations.
- **Rehab Eagle Point Park and Comiskey Park:** Eagle Point Park, home to several structures by noted landscape architect and one-time Dubuque Parks’ Superintendent Alfred Caldwell and for which National Register of Historic Places designation has been sought, was cited by many participants as a high priority for rehabilitation and enhancement. Comiskey Park also was cited as particularly important for rehabilitation; planning and grant reviews for renovations are currently underway.
- **Enhance Sidewalk Connectivity, Bikeability and Lighting:** Residents expressed a general feeling that recreation resources are good, but there are gaps in sidewalks and particularly gaps in lighting that discourage non-motorized recreation.
- **Improve Multi-Cultural Communication:** Communication among and between City officials and available services and members of different linguistic, cultural or ethnic groups, is not sufficient to facilitate inclusion and maximum use of the resources that are available today.
- **Dog-friendliness:** Making Dubuque “dog friendly” is an important consideration in helping the City’s appeal as a socially vibrant and desirable place to live. While public management in the past typically confined canine issues to enforcement of the municipal code around public health, animal control, and leash laws - today, “dog-friendliness” and dog infrastructure are part of a socially vibrant city. As noted on the Travel Dubuque website, dogs are part and parcel of family life for locals and travelers alike, and the ability to walk to “dog friendly” recreation areas is increasingly seen as an expected part of a municipal recreation system. Dog parks (i.e. fully fenced off-leash areas with water and trash services where dogs may run freely) are an expected feature of any community that purports to attract millennials; at present, the City has only the Pet Park adjacent to Bunker Hill Golf Course. The need to revisit limits on dogs in public parks, and to provide park infrastructure, was emphasized in the public engagement process.

Social + Cultural Vibrancy Recommendations

Imagine Dubuque has helped flesh out the idea of social and cultural vibrancy and “connectedness” for the City. Ways in which people from different age, racial/ethnic, religious, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds develop a sense of “connectedness” vary greatly in Dubuque, as do the types of organizations and issues that can keep sustained interest and commitment, and the information pathways and sources that are trusted by each group. In Dubuque, what worked in the past to build a sense of vibrancy and connectedness will change and adapt to ensure that this same sense of common purpose and community can be maintained. The recommendations and catalytic actions in this chapter are intended to build a common sense of “connectedness” and investment in Dubuque that can be achieved even as the city’s makeup evolves over time. As the “Dubuquer” video from Inclusive Dubuque states, these actions are about “...expanding the circle of who’s in.”

Adopt Three Mindsets

Encouraging social and cultural vibrancy cuts across all City activities. The City is well positioned to enhance vibrancy through the environmental recommended actions in Chapter 4, and by adopting three “mindsets” when looking at other areas of City investment, policy, and partnership.

- **Keep the focus on equity and inclusion.** Dubuque is already benefiting from the strong focus on equity, inclusion, and welcoming from the city’s professional, elected, business, and civic leaders. Continuing to keep this focus, and viewing policies and actions through lens of equity and inclusion will make this into a “civic habit” over time. The more equity and inclusion are built into how the city develops policies and conducts business, the easier it will be to overcome challenges and strengthen Dubuque.
- **Think of food as a “unifier.”** Dubuque has a tremendous infrastructure of organizations, space, and interest in local and healthy food systems. The Farmers’ Market and Taste of Dubuque are the two places that have already achieved social and cultural vibrancy in an inclusive way and have great affection in the community. Focusing on food systems can help bring together disparate groups and interests around a topic that is universal and multi-benefit, and for which there are already many resources in Dubuque.
- **Find or create shared spaces.** City capital and operating resources can help identify or create spaces for events that are important to social and cultural vibrancy, as well as additional events or programming oriented towards the “uniting” elements such as healthy food and active recreation.

Best Practices

The City is home, on a temporary basis, for many international students. A semi-annual invitation for international students to attend and speak at a City Council or Planning Commission meeting, or through a Mayor’s breakfast, would invite an international perspective to public discussions.

A light-hearted example is a “Snowplow ride-Along” offered by the City of South Burlington, Vermont, to visiting university students from equatorial nations, who gained a truly first-hand experience with municipal management in the snowbelt.



“City supported green spaces and community gardens everywhere, especially in Downtown. More Farmers’ Markets mid-week downtown, mid-week uptown.”

- Photo and idea shared via the project website



The ‘Taste of Dubuque’ was noted as a great inclusive event that brings together people of different cultures.



▲ Photos contributed by Bob Felderman of General Bob Photography, Dubuque, Iowa

Social + Cultural Vibrancy Recommendations

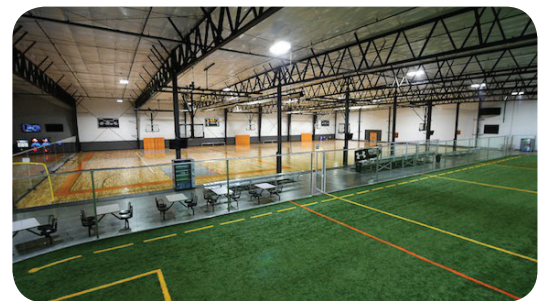
Catalytic Actions

The over-arching and primary recommendations for Dubuque on social and cultural vibrancy involve recreation, transportation, and community infrastructure. The following complimentary actions, if implemented, would have a catalytic impact on social and cultural vibrancy:

- **Consider “branding” the myriad actions that have a connection to social and cultural vibrancy** to build awareness and momentum across the community. A graphic or virtual tag could help with communication, marketing, and a general sense of “what’s happening in Dubuque.” This could apply to anything from a store expanding its offerings of local food to concerts at Dubuque’s universities and colleges.
- **Feasibility assessment for building a principal community center** for the city, potentially including an indoor recreation facility and possibly indoor/outdoor aquatic facility plus integrating health and wellness into the concept, as a catalyst and focal point for bringing together and serving an evolving and increasingly diverse city.
- **A careful look at recreation programming** with a focus on promoting equity, education, and health. A strategic update or addendum to the Park and Recreation plan looking at where and how specific elements such as neighborhood programming, flexible spaces, and ‘dog-friendliness’ can be addressed is recommended.
- **A re-working of the city’s aging recreation system** with an eye to enhancing active living, equity, and health, particularly around cardiovascular health. This re-working also should provide flexible spaces that can meet the needs of all ages and specific ethnic and cultural groups who otherwise do not participate fully in civic life.
- **Preparation of transportation and transit plans that look at linking health care, healthy food, recreation resources, and sites for cultural and artistic activities** (including universities), through a combination of fixed-route, on-demand, and ride-sourcing options. Evaluating transportation and transit from this standpoint may yield beneficial changes or at a minimum, a different perspective on why areas or activities are under-utilized and how solutions might be developed.
- **Focusing resources on access to addiction and mental health services** as a proactive, preventive measure for the betterment of the community.
- **A commitment to building greater partnerships** and integration with Dubuque’s universities and colleges around the elements of social and cultural vibrancy, encouraging a “two-way flow” of people particularly for educational and cultural events. Active marketing of events at the University of Dubuque Heritage Center and Arts @ Clarke through City and related outlets, such as Travel Dubuque, is a first step towards increasing integration of these vital offerings with other resources and events.
- **Explore opportunities to expand tourism** and local recreational venues such as a minor league baseball facility or a dinner train along the Mississippi River.



“Dubuque needs a better Community Center/Leisure Services. Our Leisure Services Department does well with what they have but their facilities are limited. In my vision of Dubuque we would have a Community Center with an indoor pool in a central location with classes for children, youth and adults. For children – classes like gymnastics, tumbling, swimming, pottery, etc. For Youth – basketball, volleyball, other sports, exercise classes, pottery, crafts. I’m not thinking about more sports played at a super competitive level but for fun. For adults – pottery, painting, crafts, exercise classes, conversational language classes. Other communities where I have lived have these kinds of activities for people of all ages. Our Leisure Services have some of this but the lack of facilities I am sure make this very hard to make work.”



“Develop a community health and wellness center.”

“A recreation center is essential to connecting all these themes - better quality of life, attracting young professionals, enhancing health and lowering obesity, providing outlets and activities for the younger generation. Consider a creative approach, make an “Olympic Village” rec center that connects varying sports and activities for all ages.”

“Develop an indoor sportsplex.”

- Photos and ideas shared via the project website.



Social + Cultural Vibrancy Recommendations

Food

- ❑ Colleges, institutions - consider purchasing from more than one contracted vendor to increase local purchasing. ♥
- ❑ Support food production spaces & establishment of Community Supported Agriculture; i.e. identifying city land that can be made available for food production. ♥♥🏠
- ❑ Communicate with other “food cities” to share ideas as this develops in Dubuque. ♥
- ❑ Recreation programming can have cooking classes addressing social (food insecurity/cost), educational (enhanced learning) and cultural (inclusion, communication) needs. ♥🏠
- ❑ Consider food access as an objective of the City’s transit systems ♥🏠
- ❑ Evaluate whether local solid waste can begin to incorporate a compost component, similar to Des Moines, that would provide a source of compost for local gardens & production. ♥♥
- ❑ Consider an active policy supporting front yard food gardening. ♥♥🏠

Education + Empowerment

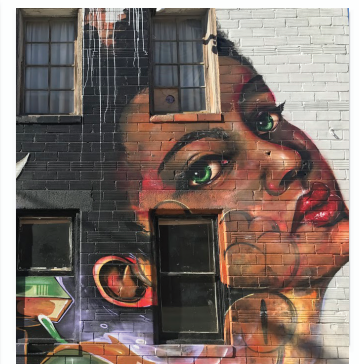
- ❑ Incorporate and support recommendations from the 2017 update of the Grade-Level Reading Community Solutions Action Plan into the implementation program for Imagine Dubuque. ♥♥🏠
- ❑ Work with community providers including non-profits, faith communities, and Dubuque-area universities to expand child care options and resources, whether through on-site programs, clearinghouses for providers, or other means. ♥♥🏠

Arts + Culture

- ❑ Work with the City’s Leisure Services Department to consider where and how recreation programming and use of public parks can bring cultural and arts events to neighborhoods that are isolated or distant from downtown. ♥🏠
- ❑ Evaluate public transit and municipal parking policies relative to their success or gaps in providing weekend and evening access to key arts and culture facilities, particularly in Downtown Dubuque and around emerging areas and venues. ♥🏠
- ❑ Promote partnerships to co-market events at the University of Dubuque’s Heritage Center and the Arts @ Clarke series as part of the City’s overall offerings. ♥
- ❑ Through partnerships with the Multicultural Family Center, senior citizen organizations/providers, the City’s educational system, and local universities, explore ways to expand how residents think about “culture” and “arts” to include new and emerging forms and expressions. ♥🏠

.....VIABLE.....
♥ LIVABLE ♥
🏠EQUITABLE 🏠

Each recommendation listed relates to making Dubuque more viable, livable, and equitable. The symbols noted above correspond to these guiding principals and are listed along with the recommendations they pertain to.



Social + Cultural Vibrancy Recommendations

Green Buildings + Historic Preservation

- ☐ Recognizing the importance of historic preservation and adaptive reuse, promote waste recovery and consider recruiting a Habitat for Humanity ReStore or other building reuse retailer. 🌱❤️🏠
- ☐ Illustrate the tangible economic and sustainability benefits—direct, indirect, and induced—to Dubuque’s economy and community from the work done by the City’s historic preservation programming and the City’s private and public sector partners. Communicate these benefits consistently to all of Dubuque’s many constituencies. 🌱❤️
- ☐ Work with Dubuque’s regional development community to identify and access new and emerging funding options, including crowd funding, to support the ongoing rehabilitation of the city’s historic properties. 🌱
- ☐ Expand existing programs, such as HEART, to train additional local workers in preservation-related building trades. 🌱🏠

Community Safety

- ☐ Work with neighborhood organizations to build pride and address litter issues, particularly in and around downtown. ❤️
- ☐ Review sidewalk implementation and repair plans, particularly for JFK Road and portions of Dodge Street, to identify places where better sidewalks would contribute to greater safety. ❤️🏠
- ☐ Assess areas of sub-standard lighting and investigate the cost and feasibility of installing additional lighting, particularly solar or LED lights; focus on Downtown Dubuque and other areas with cultural, arts, and community facilities that attract or could attract people from throughout the City. ❤️
- ☐ Continue to support the Police Department’s policies and initiatives around diversity, community and tolerance, including the Community Liaison role. Explore the potential to provide training and financial resources for the Police Department and community organizations around managing mental health issues in the context of public safety. ❤️🏠
- ☐ Foster continued partnerships between the Dubuque Police, Leisure Services, and neighborhood associations to address safety and operations, especially as new or enhanced neighborhood recreation facilities are identified and designed. ❤️🏠

🌱.....VIABLE.....🌱
❤️.....LIVABLE.....❤️
🏠.....EQUITABLE.....🏠

Each recommendation listed relates to making Dubuque more viable, livable, and equitable. The symbols noted above correspond to these guiding principals and are listed along with the recommendations they pertain to.



Social + Cultural Vibrancy Recommendations

Health

- ❑ Actively promote partnerships and policies that address mental health and addiction, focusing on prevention and building community resilience rather than reactions. ♥ 🏠
- ❑ Evaluate community-based options for supporting mental health, such as support groups for people experiencing depression, caregivers, and affected families. ♥ 🏠
- ❑ Explore the potential for Dubuque area health providers to “prescribe” fruits and vegetables as part of a strategy to combat obesity 🌿 ♥ 🏠
- ❑ Promote in-school healthy food actions including school gardens, wellness, and exercise. ♥

Recreation

- ❑ Establish a Parks and Recreation Plan to identify opportunities to provide flexible, programmable space; improve active recreation connectivity in neighborhoods; and enhance Dubuque’s “dog-friendliness.” The plan should also consider maintenance and enhancement of existing parks and recreational facilities, including opportunities to continue to partner with recreational organizations within Dubuque. ♥ 🏠
- ❑ Initiate a feasibility evaluation for a Community Center, potentially including indoor recreation and indoor/outdoor aquatic facilities, with an eye towards creating a multi-generational and central community gathering place that supports health, wellness, and social interaction among residents. ♥ 🏠
- ❑ Evaluate and revise, as appropriate, the dog-related policies for all of Dubuque’s park and recreation facilities. ♥ 🏠

🌿VIABLE..... 🌿
♥ LIVABLE ♥
🏠EQUITABLE 🏠

Each recommendation listed relates to making Dubuque more viable, livable, and equitable. The symbols noted above correspond to these guiding principals and are listed along with the recommendations they pertain to.

