the dubuque warehouse district

Dubuque Warehouse District is a compilation of significant, historic industrial warehouses that, once restored, will create an energy-efficient, mixed-used neighborhood to compete with other urban neighborhoods across the country.
The Dubuque Warehouse District restoration was selected by nearly 15,000 tri-state citizens as one of 10 big ideas by 2010.

This exciting initiative embraces the principles of sustainable & environmental stewardship, smart growth, economic prosperity and social/cultural vibrancy. Within the corridor that makes up the Dubuque Warehouse District is a compilation of significant, historic industrial warehouses that, once restored, will create an energy-efficient, mixed-used neighborhood to compete with other urban neighborhoods across the country. This pedestrian-friendly, urban, cultural atmosphere will create a Live, Work, Place product for Iowa's new, young workforce as well as contribute to a sustainable future for Iowa.

In the Dubuque Warehouse District residents can experience living in a district that values energy conservation and the environment.

- Opportunities to live in an affordable, unique 2-3,000 square foot apartment or condo that includes sustainable design features such as roof gardens, solar panels, recycling refuse, geo-thermal and power-down systems.
- Opportunities to walk or bike to work in an adjacent building in the district or in nearby downtown.
- Pedestrian friendly streets that incorporate green infrastructure and amenities including permeable pavement, open green space, bike racks, benches, historic, efficient lighting, public art and wayfinding signage.
- In the Warehouse District pedestrians will have a choice in transportation options that includes walking, biking, scooter, vehicular along with public transportation.

“Any solution to climate change must address the need to reduce emissions by being smarter about how we use our buildings.”

Richard Moe, National Trust for Historic Preservation
In the Dubuque Warehouse District residents can experience living in a district that values social/cultural vibrancy.

Today’s employee is connected globally and looking for unique experiences that include cultural diversity.

- Historic preservation and the arts are at the heart of that kind of experience and can both be found in the Dubuque Warehouse District.
- With its brick materials and open floor plan, these buildings create great flexible, loft space.
- The promotion of first floor retail space promotes pedestrian interaction.
- State of the art technology including WiFi systems will encourage residents, employees and visitors to connect with each other and others around the world all from the coffee shop, juice bar and other retail venues.
- Art and Cultural experiences such as the Voices from the Warehouse District have built a local audience that comes to the Warehouse District to experience art, music and theater – connecting new citizens with old and creating a stronger Dubuque.
- Winter Farmers Market supports sustainability by providing locally, grown produce and animal products to residents who value having a choice in food options which also contribute to a healthy local economy.

“If an employer is serious about attracting and retaining talent . . . they’ve got to understand that the ability for all people to feel welcome is absolutely critical.”

Richard Florida, Author, Rise of the Creative Class
In the Dubuque Warehouse District residents can experience living in a district that promotes economic prosperity.

Today over 90% of all job growth comes from small business. Small businesses need to keep operational costs down and thrive in environments that support collaborative entrepreneurship.

Well established local businesses in the warehouse district help promote business stability and continuity. A graphic arts company, Mission Creative has steadily grown since locating on Eighth and Jackson as has Avery Railing, providing one-of-a-kind metalsmithing needs. Dubuque Sash & Door a long-time Dubuque business provides custom wood products for building restoration has been operating successfully for over 100 years!

This has garnered the interest in high-tech output companies such as Sustainable Land Development and Genuine Genius Solutions who have located in one of the former industrial buildings. Both companies are slated to triple their employment within the next five years.

A mixed use strategy promotes the 24/7 Live, Work, Play concept and businesses such as Resa James Furniture and Hometiques have moved their showroom into the warehouse district alongside a growing Restoration Warehouse. Phoenix Fitness expanded in the Warehouse District and changed its name to “The Gym” to meet the needs of their market. Working with local partners including the Business Accelerator program, these businesses provide employment opportunities not only for Iowa’s new workforce, but also present opportunities for employment for residents who live in adjacent residential neighborhoods who do not want or can’t afford long commutes out to a west-end employer.

Today there are already hundreds of employees working in the warehouse district and this number will grow!

Dan LoBianco, Dubuque Main Street
Dubuque Warehouse District Partners

Recognizing that the Dubuque Warehouse District provided a unique opportunity for Dubuque and the State of Iowa, a group of local leaders including representatives from the City of Dubuque, Dubuque Main Street, and Warehouse District property owners met through July 2007, to develop a more concrete vision as to the revitalization of the Warehouse District. In September 2007 the City Council adopted the Warehouse District Revitalization Strategy. In December 2007 amended the Greater Downtown Urban Renewal District to include the warehouse district in order to provide financial incentives to assist in the revitalizations. The following is a list of active partners involved in the Dubuque Warehouse District initiative:

- Private Property owners
- City of Dubuque
- Dubuque Main Street (DMS)
- Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque
- NICC Business Accelerator
- Envision 2010 Warehouse District Committee (facilitated by DMS)

In addition, on-going conversations have been held with International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives ICLEI and the National Trust for Historic Preservation Office of Sustainability on ways in which we can collaborate on this initiative that emphasis sustainable stewardship.

Experience and Success

Dubuque has the experience, qualifications, and expertise to serve as the State of Iowa’s model for these initiatives. John Gronen, Paul Butler, Bob Johnson, Tony Pfohl and Tim McNamara are all private developers and practitioners of sustainable development.

Gronen & Butler:

John Gronen/Paul Butler

John Gronen’s recent initiative includes:

- Restoration of the 1100 Block of Main Street, a mixed-use retail and residential development that involved 6 buildings, 11 store-fronts and 30 apartments for downtown employees.
- Restoration of the former Dubuque Casket Company into a well-needed Community Health Center that includes 32 affordable apartments on the upper levels.
- Co-founder of Four Mounds Foundation, responsible for the restoration and preservation of this historical estate — now a national register listed historical district. The foundation also teaches at-risk, high school youth skilled trades in the restoration of homes and provide affordable housing for low-income families.
- Creator of the HEART program in collaboration with the City of Dubuque, Four Mounds Foundation to teach at-risk The HEART program was awarded the National Audrey Nelson Award presented to City staff in Washington D.C. by U.S. Senator Charles Grassley.
- Project Manager for the Town Clock Building.
- Façade and Tax Credit Manager for the current Security Building project.
- Butler & Gronen has been working with Fischer Companies on planning the redevelopment of the 900 Block of Main Street, the façade of the Julien Hotel and the Farley-Loetscher Building.
- Working on the restoration of the Historic German Bank Building, a National Historic Structure featured in periodicals produced by the National Trust for Historic Places.
- Specializes in historic renovations
- Specializes in complex, mission driven, collaborative projects Historic tax credits and low incoming housing

Bob Johnson

Bob Johnson’s experience involves:

- Restoration of the Restoration Warehouse building which includes, an architectural salvage materials company.
- Developer of the Captain Merry Inn and Spa in East Dubuque, Illinois.
- Relocation and restoration of 11 historic homes to prevent them from being demolished.
Experience and Success (cont’d)

Tony Pfohl
Tony Pfohl oversees the Fischer Companies’ Dubuque properties, working closely with cousins Matthew Quigley and Andrew Kirby from the company’s New York office. Tony Pfohl’s experience involves:

- Restoration of the Hotel Julien in Historic Old Main;
- Restoration of the former Betty Jane Building in Upper Main; and
- Restoration of the Farley-Loetscher Warehouse building (currently in design development)
- Family-owned company with three generations of real estate experience

Tim McNamara
Tim McNamara was the original visionary for the restoration of the warehouse district, beginning the phased restoration of his building in the mid-1990s. Tim’s experience involves:

- Restoration of the Wilmac Warehouse building to accommodate unique office space for a law firm, corporate office and graphic design firm; and
- Restoration of the Caradco Warehouse Building (currently in design development).
- Together these developers are leading the private sector initiative to work in partnership with the city of Dubuque to redevelopment the Dubuque Warehouse District and change the face of Dubuque and Eastern Iowa.
**Recognition**

The citizens and leaders of Dubuque understand that working together we create a better place for our residents and visitors. This formula of working in partnership to create true community revitalization has proven itself successful and has garnered our community and the State of Iowa national attention.

- 2008 & 2007 100 Best Places for Youth by America’s Promise.
- 2007 All-America City by National Civic League.
- 2007 Iowa Tourism County of the Year.
- 2007 Five-Start Quality of Life Metro by Expansion Management.
- 2007 *Inc.* magazine ranked Dubuque 22nd amount the nation’s “Top 25 Boomtowns” out of the nation’s 393 largest metro areas.
- 2007 MSN Real Estate ranked Dubuque #6 among the top 10 affordable job powerhouses for real estate.
- 2006 Iowa Great Place by State of Iowa, Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs
- 2006 the Urban Pioneer Award from the National Trust for Historic Preservation for Dubuque’s 20-year commitment to the revitalization of the city’s center.
- 2006 Economy.com (a division of Moody’s) ranked Dubuque #22 out of 387 for job growth rate.
- 2005 Phoenix Award from the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regions.
- One of 2005 Dozen distinctive destinations by the National Trust for Historic Preservation.
- 2005 *Inc.* Magazine ranked Dubuque #62 out of 274 Metro as the Best Cities to Do Business in America.”
- 2004 Expansions Management named Dubuque one of 50 Five-Star Communities.
- 2004 Preserve America Community ~ one of 20 communities across the United States and the only one in Iowa.
- 2004 Downtown Achievement Award from the International Downtown Association for the America’s River Project
- 2003 Crown Community winner by the American City & County magazine.
- Iowa League of Cities All-Star Community

Lastly, we were selected as one of six cities (and the first in Iowa) to participate in the Sustainable Design Assessment Team (SDAT) program of the American Institute of Architects. The SDAT brings together architects and other professionals from across the country to work with local stakeholders to help shape the community’s strategy to increase sustainability. The SDAT vision for Dubuque as developed by the city and our citizens is “A green, livable, thriving, integrated community that goes from good sustainability practices to great ones as a model for other cities.”

“Today cities around the country are racing each other who can adopt “green building” ordinances the fastest. Such centers of environmental activism as Portland, San Francisco, Berkley, and Santa Fe are, of course, leading the way. And what are they doing? Encouraging or mandating central vacuum systems, back draft dampers, bicycle racks and waterless toilets. And that’s fine, I guess, but again misses the larger picture. Santa Fe – along with Charleston, certainly one of the most important historic cities in America – is just about to adopt a 110-page “Sustainable Santa Fe” document. Historic preservation in that initiative? Not even mentioned. Meanwhile, Dubuque, Iowa, is far ahead of any of those places. It is in the process of designating its 28 square block warehouse district as a pilot project for a comprehensive Energy Efficiency Zone. And what does Dubuque have as a basic principle? That the adaptive reuse of those warehouse structures is key for energy conservation for Iowa’s future. I’m telling you, the model for real sustainable development is not going to be San Francisco, Santa Fe or Berkley, but Dubuque, Iowa.”

Donovan Rypkema, Place Economics

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the historic restoration of dubuque, iowa