



Corridor

FEBRUARY 2018



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VISION NORTH IOWA REGIONAL PROSPERITY STRATEGY

MORE THAN A YEAR OF HARD WORK has gone into a Regional Prosperity Strategy to be released mid-April by Vision North Iowa. This strategic plan will serve as a road map for the next five years of economic development in our region.

Vision North Iowa is a partnership between North Iowa Corridor Economic Development Corporation, the Mason City Chamber of Commerce, and Clear Lake Chamber of Commerce, plus a host of local partner organizations and stakeholders. The group hired TIP Strategies, a private consulting firm, to conduct research and facilitate the planning process.

The purpose statement of the plan is "Vision North Iowa: Working together to improve the lives of all North Iowans."

"That is the key ambition behind the whole thing," said Chad Schreck, North Iowa Corridor President and CEO. "Everything we've been talking about is all about making life better for the people who live here. It gets to the heart of what we're trying to do."

Schreck said the Regional Prosperity Strategy will be rolled out mid-April with a public event to provide an overview of the five-year plan. The 110-page document includes several reports on the current condition of North Iowa and results of public input.

Starting in February 2017, the group began collecting data, opinions, and analysis about the current status of North Iowa's economy and quality of life, as well as residents' dreams for the future of the region. Based on these findings, the finished plan identifies four main goals,

with detailed strategies to accomplish them:

1. Building a Regional Community - Establish a regional mindset that unifies North Iowans around a common vision.

2. People, Place, and Prosperity - Create an environment that retains, equips, and attracts a strong, diverse talent pipeline and increases prosperity for all North Iowans.

3. Innovation and Entrepreneurship - Advance the regional economy by retaining, expanding, and attracting high-growth companies. Leverage existing assets to strengthen the culture of entrepreneurship and expand the innovation ecosystem.

4. Business Development and Marketing - Ensure smart, sustainable, and shared economic growth by strategically promoting the region as a destination for business investment, relocation, and expansion.

The next phase will be to finalize leadership structure and partnerships, according to Schreck. Committees will be formed for each goal area, to drive progress on the action steps.

"It's really all been about engagement and inclusion," Schreck said. "We've had public participation, input workshops, and a survey process. A key plan for moving forward is to continue this component of building community."

Watch visionnorthiowa.com for announcement of the upcoming event and publication of the report.

