



GROW WITH US

2018 ANNUAL REPORT

LETTER FROM THE

PRESIDENT



As we look back at another year of focused growth and energy in our community, it's easy to see clear signs of progress. Progress as a result of leadership and partnerships.

I think this quote by Helen Keller sums up my feelings about the impact of successful partnerships in our region:

“Alone, we can do so little; together, we can do so much.”

The spirit of partnership has been the backbone of our plan of work. In 2018, together, we raised \$1.88 million dollars to create the first ever Dodge County Investment Fund, to focus on our housing needs identified in the 2017 Dodge County Housing Study. This is a shining example of the Helen Keller quote concerning strength in numbers. Together, with investors that are in the public and private industry, we have set forth and planted a mustard seed that has already begun to grow roots of workforce housing opportunities which is essential to every 2020 visioning goal founded by collaborators just four years ago.

Simply put, we cannot sustain and grow our workforce

without the housing needs being met; Heads in Beds is paramount. Additionally, we saw the growth of our GFDC staff with the addition of a Dodge County Housing Manager, Kelly Gentrup, and the exploration into new programming endeavors tied to entrepreneurial micro-lending. We were able to land 6 attraction projects in 2018 with the likes of: Integrated Seed, Ruffhouse, Pearl Academy, Infinite 8 Drone and AI School, Morningside Crossing, Downtown 2nd Story housing (Murray Properties).

We have continued to focus on our primary growth pillars:

Business Attraction

Business Expansion

Workforce Development

Quality of Life

GFDC's collaborative efforts have resulted in a base capital investment of approximately \$15 million dollars in 2018 alone. This means that the projects landed will invest those dollars in the community. As GFDC President, I thank you all for your passion and support, your love of this great community and its people.

I encourage you to take a look at this annual report and get a sense of the depth and breadth of our work, our results and impact of ongoing partnerships. **Building on this success, 2019 should be an amazing year for us all.**

BILL VOBEJDA | PRESIDENT

Greater Fremont Development Council

YEAR 4 OF

2020 VISION

What a difference one year can make! In our fourth year of the 2020 Vision, we found ourselves planting seeds in new fields of opportunity.

While we ventured into places that were non-traditional, we held true to the existing visioning that has continued to provide a stable impact on the future of Fremont and Dodge County. We have sustained a very stable business

Fremont Area Young Professionals (FAYP) Lunch and Learn



attraction activity level, through partnerships and local lead generation. We have remained focused on our targeted industry focus (animal food manufacturing and wood, metal, and plastics manufacturing). The foundation of renewed activity in quality of life and housing projects have continued with projects like (to name a few):

Morningside Crossing

Morningside Pointe

Deer Pointe

Gallery 23 East

SunRidge Place

We continue to hold to the origins of traditional business attraction efforts, that will help in permeating the quality of life needs and workforce preparedness programs.

2018 gave us a window into the future and showcased Fremont, GFDC leadership and staff as trailblazers and leaders in the State and National rural economic activities. As we continue to strive to achieve the goals of our current vision, which cannot be achieved without the partnership found in our many investors, municipal partners, and private collaborations, **we continually seek to plant new seeds of opportunity and growth for the future.**

“2018 gave us a window into the future and showcased Fremont, GFDC leadership and staff as trailblazers

1 BUSINESS ATTRACTION

GFDC processed 50 leads both directly and through partners like Greater Omaha Economic Development Partnership (GOEDP), Nebraska Department of Economic Development (NDED), and through site selection consultants and real estate professionals. Greater Fremont options were submitted to 46 of the leads. We facilitated 9 prospect visits to our community. Several of those projects are still active. We hope to get another opportunity to engage those prospects in the near future.

The average project we get leads on have the potential for capital investment of between **\$500,000 and \$1,000,000**.

50

LEADS

9

LANDED PROJECTS

9

PROSPECT VISITS

\$16 million

CAPITAL INVESTMENT

2 BUSINESS RETENTION & EXPANSION

***“Expansion efforts provide the very growth opportunities we need to continue to flourish in the Greater Fremont area*”**

6 expansion projects were identified by GFDC in 2018.

2 of those projects have begun their expansion plans with the purchase of land at Morningside North Business Park; Kent Adams Construction and Ted’s Tarps and Covers. Legacy Post and Beam began the 2nd phase of their new location and successfully obtained Nebraska Advantage financing for a \$1 million expansion.

Though we landed the attraction of that business in 2017, we were happy to open a 2nd project with them and assist with resource connections for their planned 2nd phase.

As we respect the confidentiality of these efforts, not all expansion announcements can be shared publicly. These expansion efforts provide the very growth opportunities we need to continue to flourish in

the Greater Fremont area, and we are pleased to have the opportunity to provide technical assistance to our existing industries in their expansion efforts.

GFDC visited with 74 existing companies and identified 54 opportunities to assist companies with resource connections, introductions and technical assistance.

BUSINESS RETENTION & EXPANSION

The first Annual Business Visit Blitz was held in June 2018 with visits made to 42 companies by GFDC staff with the assistance of resource service partners including:

Nebraska Department of Labor
Northeast Nebraska Economic Development District
Nebraska Business Development Center
Black Hills Energy
Nebraska Public Power District
Omaha Public Power District
Manufacturing Extension Partnership
Center for Rural Affairs

In our effort to be leaders and partners, in all development efforts in our area, we have participated in approximately 125 community and resource meetings to foster growth ideas and partnerships for the future of the Greater Fremont area and Dodge County.

JayHawk Boxes during the Business Blitz



3

LOCAL EXPANSIONS

6 Identified BRE Projects,
3 Landed in 2018

74

EXISTING BUSINESS VISITS

Held Business Visit Blitz with assistance
from several Resource Service Partners:
42 Companies Total

54

BUSINESS ASSISTS

Resource Connections, Technical
Assistance, Peer-to-Peer Introductions.
Assistance also led to award for 2
InternNebraska grants for local business.

125

COMMUNITY & RESOURCE MEETINGS

3 WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Dream It. Do It.

DIDI MEETINGS

During the year, staff was able to attend 24 DIDI meetings. Barb Pierce is DIDI Area Director for Fremont/Dodge County and serves on the Omaha Area DIDI Leadership Committee. The past year has been spent developing new program goals including an expanded Ambassador program, marketing tools for member businesses to recruit, and supporting the new Omaha Area DIDI traveling trailer (M3E) used to showcase manufacturing careers and skills to students at area schools. GFDC investors that participate regularly in the Omaha Area DIDI meetings are Fremont Beef Company and Valmont.

STUDENT INTERACTION | HOPE CENTER

The trailer made a trip to the Fremont Hope Center in October. It is staffed entirely by DIDI volunteers from local industry. 40 Fremont students participated when the DIDI M3E trailer made a stop at the Fremont Hope Center for kids during National Manufacturing Month of October. Overall, 1200 students in the Omaha area visited the M3E trailer last year.

DIDI EVENTS

The DIDI Trailer visit reached 40 students; GFDC also participated in the High School Job Fair (900 students) and Sophomore Career Day (1,000 students).



Fremont Talent Ready Initiative

THE MISSION

The Fremont Talent Ready Initiative began in July 2017 with the creation of a Workforce Steering Committee made up of staff and members from the boards of Greater Fremont Development Council and Fremont Chamber, and Greater Omaha Chamber's talent team. The initiative's goal is to bring together industry, education, and workforce service partners to facilitate the creation of implementable strategies and tactics in the areas of talent attraction, employee retention, and skills training.

CONVENING

FALL 2017

The TRI group met monthly with workforce service partners from Nebraska Department of Labor (NDOL), Heartland Workforce Services (HWS), Nebraska Department of Economic Development (NDED) and Nebraska Vocational Rehab (VR) to review Fremont centric data, workforce labor reports, and to identify gaps in workforce development.

MARCH 2018

Held employer listening sessions for three target industries; manufacturing, transportation, healthcare.

Sessions were facilitated by Ed Morrison, from Agile Strategy Lab of Purdue University. Two weeks following that, Ed Morrison led community leaders and industry partners through a Strategic Doing workshop. Out of that effort came three groups made up of industry, workforce partners, non-profits and educational leaders committed to meeting monthly to collaborate on opportunities that attract, retain, and skill up workers for Fremont. Those three groups are Manufacturing/Transportation, Healthcare, & Non-profits.

COLLABORATION

A sample of the projects worked on by each group are:

MFG/TRANS – Drive Thru Job Fair

NONPROFITS – Career Placement Pilot

HEALTHCARE – Daycare Needs Survey

PLANNING

The Strategic Doing groups meet monthly to build relationships and work together on other opportunities to tackle as a community.



Fremont Area Diesel Tech Academy

8 MEETINGS | 3 GRADUATES

Barb attended 8 MCC Diesel Tech Advisory meetings. The Fremont Area Diesel Tech Academy had 3 Seniors who graduated in May. The program's first female joined during the 2018 Winter quarter. GFDC investor, Butler Ag hosted the class until May 2018. In the fall, GFDC investor Fremont Contract Carriers opened up space for

the Fremont Area Diesel Academy to accommodate for program growth. Eight students were accepted to the academy in the fall. The class schedule was adjusted for 2018-19 so students can participate in extracurricular activities as well as participate in the Academy which is taught by an MCC instructor as a dual credit course for high school students.

Careerokit

1416 STUDENTS, 32 COMPANIES PARTICIPATE

Collaborated with the Fremont Chamber on this regional program to bring local industry partners into the schools for presentations. Fremont Middle School, Johnson Crossing, and Fremont High School all participated.

DIDI's traveling M3E trailer visited students at the Fremont Hope Center in October.



4 QUALITY OF LIFE

Pure Properties Groundbreaking



Dodge County Investment Fund

With Businesses in Dodge County and Fremont expanding, there has been an increased need for workforce housing in Dodge County.

The need for housing to remedy the current and future growth propelled the Greater Fremont Development Council (GFDC) into creating the Dodge County Investment Fund (DCIF); this effort will help tackle the recent county housing study's recommendation to create 1500 units to keep pace with growth in Dodge County. The timeliness of Governor Ricketts and the State Legislature's LB 518 Rural Workforce Housing Fund Bill served as a direct catalyst for the creation of the Dodge County Investment Fund. **To date, GFDC has raised \$1.03 million dollars to match a Nebraska Department of Economic Development (NDED) grant of \$850,000 dollars from the Rural Workforce Housing Fund.**

2020 INVESTOR MEETINGS

JUNE

Infinite 8 Institute

Method Mark

SEPTEMBER

Tour of Infinite 8 Institute

Omaha Startup Collaborative

Kitchen Startup

HOUSING STATISTICS

18

LEADS

851

PROJECTED UNITS FOR DCIF

2000

TOTAL PROJECTED UNITS

\$1.88million

DODGE COUNTY INVESTMENT FUND

(1.03 million raised locally, \$850,000 awarded through RWHF)

\$1.685million

DCIF AWARDED FUNDS

\$14million

DCIF CAPITAL INVESTMENT

4

APPROVED DCIF APPLICANTS

OTHER ACTIVITY

OUT-OF-MARKET VISITS AND PRESENTATIONS

MID AMERICA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL (MAEDC)

Site Selector Conference

Garry and Barb attended. The Site Selector Panel cited *incentives* as the number one issue influencing their project location decisions.

NATIONAL RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPERS

ASSOCIATION (NREDA)

Garry inducted as Vice President and spoke on panel about economic development best practices tied to rural housing

RURAL FUTURES INSTITUTE

Catch Up With Chuck

Live interview of Garry's personal journey and appreciation for rural Nebraska

OPEN SKY HOUSING FORUM

Garry participated on a panel

NEBRASKA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION (NEDA)

Garry attended annual conference and was elected to the NEDA Board

BRIDGES OUT OF POVERTY CONFERENCE

Garry attended with Fremont non-profit partners

NEBRASKA WORKFORCE BOARD

Garry, Barb & Board ex-officio, Tara Lea (Fremont Chamber) presented about the Talent Ready Initiative

NEBRASKA INVESTMENT FINANCE AUTHORITY (NIFA)

Workforce Housing Forum

Garry attended and presented on the DCIF

MIDLAND UNIVERSITY ATHLETICS

Garry presented to 500 student athletes

OTHER COMMUNITY PRESENTATIONS

Kiwanis

Rotary

Optimist Club

Dodge County Board of Supervisors

Fremont City Council

Leadership Fremont

Leadership Youth Academy

Fremont Area Community Foundation Board

North Bend Community Leaders

Hooper Community Leaders

Scribner Community Leaders

STAFF

NEW STAFF MEMBERS

Two new staff were hired: Abby Wharff (left) filled the Creative Program Coordinator position, and Kelly Gentrup (right) filled a brand new position in partnership with NIFA - Dodge County Housing Program Manager.



2018 STAFF

GARRY CLARK

Executive Director

BARB PIERCE

Existing Business Director

KELLY GENTRUP

*Dodge County Housing
Program Manager*

ABBY WHARFF

Creative Program Coordinator



BOARD OF
DIRECTORS

BARRY BENSON

First National Bank Fremont

MARLIN BRABEC

Don Peterson & Associates

ELIZA FERZELY

Midland University

ROB GEORGE

Dodge County Supervisor

SCOTT GETZSCHMAN

Mayor, City of Fremont

CHUCK JOHANNSEN

First State Bank & Trust Co.

LES LEECH

Fremont Beef Company

TIM MCCORMICK

Fremont Contract Carriers

DAVE MITCHELL

*Yost, Schafersman, Lamme, Hillis,
Mitchell, Schulz & Hartmann, P.C.*

AL SAWTELLE

*City of Fremont Utility and
Infrastructure Board*

LES SHALLBERG

Fremont Electric, Inc.

GFDC Board of Directors



2018 OFFICERS

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BILL VOBEJDA

Methodist Fremont Health

VICE PRESIDENT

CHRIS WALZ

Walnut Radio, LLC.

TREASURER

SCOTT MEISTER

Pinnacle Bank

PAST PRESIDENT

MIKE ARPS

Arps Red-E Mix

SECRETARY

GARRY CLARK

Executive Director,
*Greater Fremont Development
Council*

EX-OFFICIO

TARA LEA

Fremont Area Chamber

EX-OFFICIO

DEE BAIRD

*Greater Omaha Economic
Development Partnership*

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