

Here We Grow



GREATER
FREMONT
DEVELOPMENT
COUNCIL

2025 ANNUAL
REPORT

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Serving as Chair of the Greater Fremont Development Council has reinforced a simple truth: meaningful economic progress happens when people and partners move in the same direction. This past year demonstrated the power of alignment—between private investors, public leadership, and a committed board and staff—working together to position Fremont for what comes next.

Rather than reacting to challenges, our focus has been on building capacity for the future. Continued advancement of the Fremont Inland Port Authority reflects long-term thinking about infrastructure, access, and competitiveness. At the same time, the full deployment of housing grant funds allowed those dollars to begin doing what they were intended to do—support real housing solutions and strengthen our community's foundation.

One of the most exciting developments this year is Fremont's selection as a host community for a Developer Academy in 2026. This first-ever opportunity locally represents a strategic investment in people, knowledge, and momentum. By helping develop builders and developers, we are taking a proactive step toward addressing housing needs and supporting responsible growth for years to come.

What ties these efforts together is partnership. Progress of this scale requires trust, collaboration, and a shared commitment from both the public and private sectors. Fremont continues to benefit from leaders who are willing to invest time, resources, and vision into the community's future—and that collective effort is what gives me the greatest confidence as I conclude my term.

As I step away from the role of Chair, I do so with optimism. The organization is well positioned, the leadership is strong, and the path forward is filled with opportunity. I am grateful for the chance to serve and for the many individuals and partners who continue to believe in Fremont's potential.

GFDC BOARD CHAIR

Jennifer Bixby

Better Homes and
Gardens Real Estate
Don Peterson & Associates



“ Meaningful economic progress happens when people and partners move in the same direction.”

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

2025 OFFICERS

CHAIR

Jennifer Bixby
BHGRE Don Peterson & Associates

VICE CHAIR

Mitch Sawyer
S2 Roll-offs, LLC

TREASURER

Scott Meister
Pinnacle Bank

PAST CHAIR

Brett Richmond
Methodist Hospital and
Methodist Women's Hospital

SECRETARY

Megan Skiles
President & CEO, GFDC

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Bob Missel
Dodge County Supervisor

Carol Fenske
Premier Staffing, Inc.

Chase Dillon
Sid Dillon Chevrolet

Chris Walz
Walnut Radio, LLC

Chuck Johannsen
RVR Bank

Danny Connerly
Wholestone Farms

Dev Sookram
Mayor, City of Fremont



Dave Mitchell
Yost, Lamme, Hillis, Mitchell,
Schulz, Hartmann, & Wilson P.C.

Diane Mallette
Structural Components Systems

Jessica Kolterman
Lincoln Premium Poultry

John Kelly
Omaha Public Power District

Kelly Thompson
Thompson Construction

Les Shallberg
Fremont Electric, Inc.

Maggie Diers Yost
Deer Pointe & Diers Ford

Matt Mueller
FNBO

Matt Taylor
Fremont Beef Company

Michelle Wiese
Board of Public Works

Mike Arps
Arps Red-E Mix

2025 EX-OFFICIO

Alec Gorynski
Greater Omaha ED Partnership

Brad Dahl
Fremont Public Schools

Brenda Wilberding
Fremont Chamber of Commerce

Jeff Shanahan
Department of Utilities

Jody Sanders
City of Fremont

Laura Jensen
Midland University

Todd Hansen
Metropolitan Community College

GFDC STAFF



Megan Skiles
President & CEO



Kelsey Martinez
Director of Business Services



Ryan Kephart
Director of Community
Development &
Grant Administration



Stephanie Schurkamp
Director of Operations

2025 INVESTORS



TIER I

FNBO

Fremont Beef Company
Lincoln Premium Poultry
Methodist Fremont Health
Pinnacle Bank
RVR Bank

TIER II

Arps Red-E-Mix, Inc.
Better Homes and Gardens Real Estate Don Peterson & Associates
Dale Olson
Deer Pointe Corporation
Diers Ford Lincoln
Fremont Electric, Inc.
S2 Roll-offs, LLC
Sid Dillon Chevrolet, Inc.
Structural Component Systems, Inc.

TIER III

Gene Steffy Chrysler Jeep Dodge Ram
Wholestone Farms
Yost, Lamme, Hillis, Mitchell, Schulz,
Hartmann & Wilson P.C.

TIER IV

Allo Communications
Christensen Lumber
Erickson & Brooks
Getzschman Heating, LLC
Great Plains Communications
Legacy Post & Beam
Marlin & Marla Brabec
Omaha Public Power District
Shaw, Hull, & Navarette
Thompson Construction, Inc.
Walnut Radio

TIER V

Abe Krasne Home Furnishings
All Metals Market, Inc.
Burns & McDonnell
Eakes Office Solutions
First Northeast Bank of Nebraska

Hills Farm, Inc.
HyVee Food Stores, Inc.
JEO Consulting Group, Inc.
Moostash Joe Tours, Inc.
Olsson Associates
Pathfinder Farm Management
Platte Valley Bank
Premier Staffing
Pure Property Management

EDUCATORS

Fremont Public Schools
Metropolitan Community College
Midland University

PUBLIC PARTNERS

City of Fremont
Fremont Department of Utilities
Dodge County

EX-OFFICIOS

Fremont Area Chamber
Greater Omaha Economic
Development Partnership (GOEDP)

Because of the continued support of our investors and partners, GFDC advances housing, workforce, business growth, and quality of life initiatives across Fremont and Dodge County.

BUSINESS ATTRACTION

Goal: To secure new investment and support job creation through the successful attraction of new-to -market companies.

2025 ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS

10
SITE
VISITS

20
PROJECTS
OPENED

RAIL
DEVELOPMENT
CONCEPT
APPROVED BY
UNION PACIFIC

- Throughout the year, the Inland Port Authority site was presented to several national site selection and broker groups gaining the exposure of 25+ industrial real estate industry professionals
- Participated in the Greater Omaha Site Selection Familiarization Tours
- In partnership with the Fremont Inland Port Authority and Dodge County, GFDC administered \$2M in State grant dollars towards the engineering of Morningside Road
- Secured a \$200,000 state grant for a new business in the Christensen Business Park, Dostofarm who is set to start construction in 2026

WELCOME TO FREMONT, DOSTOFARM!

Dostofarm is a Germany based small manufacturer set to become the newest tenant at Christensen Business Park, construction to start in 2026, where they will manufacture high-quality ingredients for the feed industry.



FREMONT INLAND PORT NAMED UNION PACIFIC FOCUS SITE

Elevating Fremont's Role in Regional Logistics and Industrial Growth

In August 2025, the Fremont Municipal Inland Port was officially designated a **Union Pacific Focus Site**, a recognition that significantly strengthens Fremont's position as a competitive location for industrial and logistics investment. This designation signals that the site has undergone extensive pre-planning and evaluation, offering companies greater confidence, speed, and certainty when considering development opportunities.

Located just 15 minutes northwest of Omaha, the Inland Port encompasses more than **1,600 acres of strategically positioned, developable land** with access to major transportation corridors and utility infrastructure. The Focus Site status confirms that critical elements such as rail planning, infrastructure coordination, and site readiness have already been reviewed at a high level, allowing prospective companies to move more efficiently from interest to investment.

"This designation dramatically enhances our ability to market Fremont as a logistics-ready, industrial-ready destination," said Megan Skiles, President & CEO of the Greater Fremont Development Council. "It reflects years of strategic planning and partnership and strengthens our ability to compete for high-quality projects."

The designation also aligns directly with GFDC's **Here We Grow** strategy, reinforcing the community's long-term commitment to proactive economic development, infrastructure readiness, and sustainable growth.

“ With Union Pacific’s pre-approved rail access and our own strategic investments, we can now offer companies speed, certainty, and efficiency.”
— Megan Skiles, President & CEO, GFDC

Why This Matters for Fremont

- ✓ Positions Fremont as one of Nebraska's most competitive logistics-ready sites
- ✓ Provides greater certainty and speed for employers evaluating the community
- ✓ Strengthens regional visibility with site selectors and industry partners
- ✓ Supports long-term job creation and investment opportunities



BUSINESS RETENTION & EXPANSION

Goal: To support one of our community and region's assets – our existing businesses – to retain existing investment and employment levels and to assist with opportunities to grow and create new quality jobs in Fremont.

2025 ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS

63
BUSINESS
RETENTION
VISITS

27
BUSINESSES
ASSISTED

5
EXPANSION
PROJECTS
OPENED

- Delivered 8 small business learning sessions engaging 82 participants
- Hosted bilingual QuickBooks workshops through the Small Business Education Series
- Provided an SBA 101 course to help small businesses navigate Small Business Administration resources
- Received one Welstead Fund application
- Presented business resources with Spanish Networking Group, ChamberNet, Rotary, MainStreet Mingles, Leadership Fremont, Leadership Midland, and Youth Leadership

FREMONT CREATIVE COLLECTIVE PARTNERSHIP

In 2025, GFDC entered into a formal partnership with the Fremont Creative Collective (FCC) to expand support for entrepreneurs and small businesses across the community, and the results were immediate. Through FCC's programming and outreach efforts, the collaboration increased participation, added additional sessions, and attracted a record number of pitch event applicants, broadening both the reach and overall impact of these initiatives.

Looking ahead, GFDC will continue investing in this partnership to strengthen FCC's marketing, outreach, and program delivery, ensuring sustained support and long-term growth for Fremont's entrepreneurial ecosystem.



WHOLESTONE FARMS EXPANSION

Cold Storage Expansion and Wholestone Prestage Growth in Fremont

Wholestone Prestage is making a significant investment in its Fremont operation as part of a broader, multi-year growth strategy designed to strengthen processing capacity and meet growing market demand. A key component of this expansion is a \$40 million cold storage facility.

The new cold storage facility will enable products to move directly from the processing floor into a controlled-temperature environment without off-site transport, supporting Wholestone Prestage's domestic and export business. The facility features modern blast-chill technology, enabling products to reach safe temperatures more quickly—an important factor for high-volume operations and international distribution.

Wholestone Prestage's Fremont plant currently employs 1,324 people and harvests approximately 11,300 head per day, making it one of the region's largest employers and a critical part of the food processing supply chain. The cold storage investment supports this scale of operation while positioning the facility for continued growth.

The cold storage project is one element of a broader expansion plan at the Fremont facility. As additional phases come online, Wholestone Prestage anticipates creating approximately 450 new local jobs and a roughly 33 percent increase in processing volume.

Construction activity related to the project is also providing near-term economic benefits, supporting local contractors and skilled trades across electrical, mechanical, and HVAC services.

Recently, the company adopted the name Wholestone Prestage for its Fremont, Nebraska, and Eagle Grove, Iowa, plants. Consumers will continue to find its fresh pork products in the meat case under the Wholestone Farms label.



Photo Caption: Jerry Sorrick, Director of Plant Engineering for Wholestone Prestage, stands in front of the Fremont facility's cold storage construction site, where a major expansion is underway.



THE CART AND CO'S SUCCESS

From Pitch It Event to Pop-Up Storefront

The Cart and Co's journey began at the Fremont Creative Collective's *Pitch It* event in 2023, where owner Erika Morem's concept earned finalist recognition along with strong community support. With encouragement, mentorship, and access to local resources, she transformed her idea into action and began building her business.

Today, The Cart and Co operates from its own downtown pop-up space, serving customers from Erika's signature mobile cart and bringing fresh energy to Fremont's small business scene. Her story reflects the power of local entrepreneurship programs and demonstrates how providing opportunities to pitch, connect, and grow can turn promising ideas into thriving businesses.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT & PREPAREDNESS

Goal: To ensure that our current and future workforces have the right skills to meet the needs of existing businesses and prospective businesses so that our emerging workforce choose to earn a quality living here and help the Fremont Area thrive.

2025 ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS

23
MIDLAND
MENTORSHIP
PAIRS

11,881
WEBSITE CLICKS
TO OUR NEW
ATTRACTION
WEBSITE

\$700,000
GEER & DYTI
GRANT
FUNDING
DEPLOYED

- Launched the Here We Grow attraction campaign in partnership with the Fremont Area Chamber of Commerce and the Fremont and Dodge County Visitors Bureau
- Hosted an Employee Resource fair to connect industry workers in our community with a variety of community resources including, health care, banking, and housing
- Facilitated teacher externships for FPS faculty to gain exposure to real-life applications to bring back to their classrooms
- Supported mentorship connections between collegiate students and local industry leaders
- \$700,000 in grants administered to Fremont Public Schools for workforce education
- Collaborated with Midland University on a childcare-focused community capstone project

The Teacher Externship Program connects educators with local employers to bring real-world learning into the classroom.

“ It was a great way to collaborate with community and clinical experiences and to celebrate what we do here at the hospital through an outsider’s perspective.”

- Deborah Willcox, MBA, RD, LMNT, LD Chief Clinical Dietitian Methodist Fremont Health

“ ...The externship increased my confidence and gave me real-world experiences I could immediately bring back to the classroom. My students are more engaged and better prepared for careers in health and human services.”

- Tiffany Fritzing-Lopez, FHS Family and Consumer Science Educator, Teacher Extern

Here We Grow

HERE WE GROW ATTRACTION CAMPAIGN

Promoting Growth, Opportunity & Quality of Life

The **Here We Grow** attraction campaign showcases Fremont as a vibrant, growing community rich with opportunity and quality of life. Developed in partnership with the Fremont Area Chamber of Commerce and the Fremont and Dodge County Visitors Bureau, the campaign shares authentic stories and visuals that highlight how we **Play, Build, Empower, Create, Celebrate,** and **Connect** across our community.

By elevating local people, businesses, and places, **Here We Grow** strengthens regional visibility, supports talent attraction, and reinforces pride in calling Fremont home.



QUALITY OF LIFE ENHANCEMENT

Goal: To enhance the quality of life for all current and future residents to ensure that Fremont area residents and companies have a bright future full of opportunities.

2025 ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS

\$4.4M
IN
HOUSING
FUNDS
MANAGED

31+
HOUSING
INQUIRIES
FIELDER

3
NEW HOUSING
PROJECTS
SUPPORTED BY
GFDC'S FREMONT
HOME FUND

- 31+ infill and rehab project inquiries identified the potential for up to 87 housing units
- Planned and developed the SPARK Developer Academy launching in 2026 to build local development capacity
- Partnered with Fremont Area Community Foundation, Fremont Area Chamber of Commerce, United Way, and the Methodist Fremont Health Foundation to finalize the Fremont Community Scorecard
- Supported the Unified Development Code update through stakeholder participation, approved in late 2025

SPARK DEVELOPER ACADEMY LAUNCHING IN FREMONT

In 2026, Fremont will host the SPARK Developer Academy, a week-long intensive training and networking program designed for emerging real estate developers with a passion for community transformation. Participants will receive foundational training in real estate development fundamentals, build formal and informal professional networks, and connect with lenders, mentors, and development professionals to accelerate their projects. The Academy also fosters a supportive ecosystem that enhances access to financing and practical resources for future housing and community development. This opportunity reflects Fremont's commitment to investing in local capacity and expanding the community's ability to turn development ideas into reality.



REVITALIZING HOUSING IN FREMONT



**Richard Pearson &
Priscilla Wilson**

Vacant rental
rehabilitated into an
owner occupied home
near Barnard Park.



H&A Investments

Dilapidated structure
upgraded into safe,
modern housing. near
Buckridge Park.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Community growth only happens through intentional partnerships! To help facilitate more collaboration, our staff participates in a variety of other community group efforts.

- 6 REGIONS One Nebraska Initiative
- Fremont Family YMCA Board of Directors
- Fremont Area Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors
- Fremont Area Chamber of Commerce Diplomats
- Fremont Creative Collective Board of Directors
- MainStreet of Fremont Board of Directors
- Rebuilding Together Platte Valley East Board of Directors
- Unified Development Code and Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee
- FACC Women's Summit Planning Committee
- Fremont Area Habitat for Humanity Friends
- Fremont Community Scorecard Committee
- Downtown Design Revitalization Committee
- Omaha Competes
- Leadership Fremont
- Leadership Fremont 2.0
- FACC ChamberNet
- MainStreet of Fremont E3 Committee
- Nebraska Economic Developers Association (NEDA)
- Nebraska Housing Developers Association
- NEDA Legislative Committee

Here We Grow

ECONOMIC GROWTH INDICATORS

LOOK AT OUR MOMENTUM

A Snapshot of the Key Indicators Driving Fremont's Continued Economic Growth

Median Household Income Growth			
Community /Region	2014-2018 Average	2019-2023 Average	% Growth
Fremont	\$53,101	\$71,294	34%
Nebraska	\$59,116	\$74,985	27%
United States	\$60,293	\$78,538	30%

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table S1903



INCOME GROWTH

Why it Matters: The growth reflects how incomes are improving for working families and improved financial stability for households at all income levels



BUILDING ACTIVITY GROWTH

Why it Matters: Building permit activity signals private investment and confidence in Fremont's future. New residential, commercial, and industrial projects expand housing options, create jobs, and grow the local tax base that funds community services.



RETAIL & SALES GROWTH

Why it Matters: Net taxable sales show how dollars circulate locally. Reflecting real economic growth and higher sales tax revenues for community improvements.

City of Fremont & Dodge County Permit Data		
Year	Total Number of Permits	Associated Value (\$)
2015	76	14,087,126
2016	70	20,815,011
2017	174	282,435,262
2018	93	31,459,183
2019	108	48,701,052
2020	114	53,894,044
2021	136	38,916,827
2022	138	75,650,211
2023	217	136,529,810
2024	160	58,523,028
Jan - Nov 2025	202	101,732,837

*Data provided by City of Fremont and Dodge County, compiled by Omaha Chamber of Commerce

* Total permits include all single family, multi family and non-residential (new construction) permits with a valuation of \$10,000 or more. It does not include non-residential - tenant improvements.

Dodge County Annual Net Taxable Sales (Excluding Motorized)	
Year	Net Taxable Sales (\$)
2015	429,218,770
2016	436,457,827
2017	457,325,618
2018	492,419,582
2019	495,571,310
2020	518,711,516
2021	622,867,697
2022	707,251,763
2023	665,303,384
2024	639,629,896
Jan. - Nov. 2025	656,927,943

Source: Nebraska Department of Revenue, Nebraska Non-Motor Vehicle Sales Tax Collections by County & Selected Cities.

PARTNERSHIPS

STRONGER TOGETHER

Teamwork Makes the Dream Work!

The Greater Fremont Development Council's progress is made possible through strong partnerships with local government, schools, nonprofits, and business organizations. Together, we align resources, share expertise, and advance initiatives that strengthen Fremont's economy and quality of life.

PARTNERSHIPS POWER OUR PROGRESS

Thank you to all of our community program partners in helping to make 2025 a successful year!

City of Fremont
Fremont Department of Utilities
Dodge County
Fremont Municipal Inland Port Authority
Fremont Public Schools
Metropolitan Community College
Midland University
Nebraska Department of Economic
Development

Fremont Area Chamber of Commerce
Greater Omaha Economic
Development Partnership (GOEDP)
Fremont Creative Collective
Rebuilding Together Platte Valley East
Fremont and Dodge County Visitors Bureau
Fremont Area Community Foundation
Fremont Area Habitat for Humanity

“Partnerships are the foundation of everything we build.”
— Megan Skiles, President & CEO, GFDC



**GREATER
FREMONT
DEVELOPMENT
COUNCIL**

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