



Greater
BURLINGTON
Partnership

2023 YEAR IN REVIEW

Letter from the President & CEO



Dear Greater Burlington Partnership Members and Investors:

The Greater Burlington Partnership 2023 Annual Report is all about impact. It is about the impact of the collaborative efforts of our four dynamic divisions steering towards a singular goal—propelling economic growth throughout the region. It is about the resounding impact of countless businesses investing in our mission, fostering an environment where both commerce and community thrive. The collective strength of volunteer leaders, civic influencers, and the dedicated Partnership staff converge, crafting a collaboration that continues to propel the Greater Burlington region forward.

Within these pages, tangible evidence unfolds, illustrating the profound influence that our organization has had on the region. Victories in job creation, substantial private investments, and transformative community enhancements mark our journey. Each division within the Partnership showcases triumphs in their respective programs, demonstrating robust economic development.

Delving into the specific contributions of our divisions, the Chamber of Commerce report explores the \$10,000 impact forged by the Chamber of Commerce Leadership Class on the Burlington Community School District. It also highlights the growing influence of the Chamber's podcast, and showcases the innovative initiatives introduced through the Young Professionals program. Further exploration reveals the transformative impacts of new jobs and multimillion-dollar capital investments facilitated by Grow Greater Burlington.



Downtown Partners, Inc. stands as a beacon, demonstrating its influence on the central district through notable business growth, significant building renovations, and a striking new brand identity. The Convention and Visitors Bureau takes center stage, shedding light on the ripple effects of sports tourism and the burgeoning success of riverboat tourism on our local economy.

Furthermore, the 2023 Annual Report embodies the cumulative impact of your participation and investment. None of our accomplishments would have been possible without your invaluable support. On behalf of the entire staff and Board members, we extend our heartfelt gratitude.

As we peer into the future, enthusiasm brims as we gear up for the Iowa Army Ammunition Plant expansion and unveil innovative programming aligned with the Partnering for the Future 5-year priorities—Grow Workforce, Grow Business, and Grow Population. Looking ahead, we are excited to deepen our engagement with the community, fostering partnerships that not only sustain but enhance our impact. The commitment of our stakeholders ensures that the Greater Burlington Partnership remains a driving force in propelling our community towards sustained growth, resilience, and continued success.

Thank you for your unwavering dedication to elevating the economic vitality and quality of life in Greater Burlington. Here's to a future of continued collaboration, shared success, and an enduring legacy of progress and prosperity.

Della D. Schmidt
President & CEO



Tim Lundgren, Board Chair
Farm Bureau Financial Services

Serving as the Chair of the Chamber Board for the last two years has been extremely eye-opening as to the true day-to-day operation of the Greater Burlington Partnership. From dreaming up a potential new opportunity, to the visualization of how it can best help our stakeholders and SEIA community members, planning, fine-tuning, implementation, corrective action, and beyond, I'm continually amazed by all that the GBP is able to accomplish.

Thank you to the GBP staff for all you do (most of it behind the scenes), to my fellow board, committee, and cabinet members for your dedication and willingness to volunteer your time in serving our SEIA community members, and to all of you who support the mission of the GBP to continue to make Greater Burlington the epitome of a great place to live, work, and play. It has been my great honor to serve you. On to 2024!

OFFICERS

Chairperson

Tim Lundgren, Farm Bureau Financial Services

Chair-Elect

Melinda Bickel, Bickel's Cycling & Fitness

Treasurer

Gina Crabtree, Burlington Area YMCA

At-Large

Joe Jolin, Jolin Media

Tim Lundgren

Farm Bureau Financial Services - Tim Lundgren

Cheryl Plank

Hope Haven, A Division of Imagine the Possibilities, Inc.

Liz Ross

Two Rivers Bank & Trust

Joanna Schneden

Two Rivers Bank & Trust

Melissa Schwenker

Ruhl&Ruhl Realtors

Craig Smith

Sterzing Food Company

Brandon Upton

KPI Concepts, LLC

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Melinda Bickel

Bickel's Cycling & Fitness

Ann Brotherson

Serving it Safe with Ann

Michelle Brown

Southeastern Community College

Jeff Burkhart

MidwestOne Bank

Gina Crabtree

Burlington Area YMCA

Sara Hecox

Southeast Iowa Regional Planning Commission

Joe Jolin

Jolin Media

Stephanie Kozlowski

Kozlowski Law Group

Chamber of Commerce

Bringing Accomplishments *home*



Greater Burlington Leadership



Greater Burlington Young Professionals



Cash Mob at Weind Harold's

- All Things Greater Burlington Podcast hosted by Steven Brody continues to interview business owners, public officials, and Chamber award winners, crossing the 50-episode threshold.
- Coffee with the Chamber was launched allowing staff and members to meet on a quarterly basis to discuss and share Chamber initiatives and programs.
- The Greater Burlington Leadership 2022 - 2023 Class Project was a trivia night fundraiser for the VIBE Program through Burlington Community School District, raising approximately \$10,000.
- The Greater Burlington Leadership Class of 2023-2024 has 20 members, remaining a strong pillar of talent retention in Greater Burlington.
- Hosted the annual Public Officials Reception and seven Candidate Forums for City Council and School Board elections in Burlington, West Burlington, Danville, and Mediapolis.
- Grow with Google presented four in-house sessions for Chamber members to improve their online footprint.
- The Chamber Young Professionals hosted the first-ever regional YP conference, attracting 60+ attendees from as far as 150 miles.

MISSION: The Burlington/West Burlington Area Chamber of Commerce is a membership-based association of businesses, professional leaders and individuals working together to promote economic growth, employment opportunities, government advocacy, excellence in education, and quality of life.



Eric Benne, Board Chair
Two Rivers Bank & Trust

What a year! It is an exciting time for economic development in the Greater Burlington area. From Western Smokehouse to Toba Foods to the IAAAP modernization, projects and investments abound. This past year saw \$76 million in capital investments and numerous jobs created as a result. The community has not yet even begun to realize the full potential of these investments. I am proud of the job that Jeremy Hess and the Grow Greater Burlington Board have done to ensure this community seizes upon these opportunities for future success! I cannot wait for what is next!

OFFICERS

Chairperson

Eric Benne, Two Rivers Bank & Trust

Chairperson - Elect

Bob Huffman, Huffman's Farm & Home

Treasurer

Tina McCulloch, Big River Resources

Past Chair

Charlie Walsh, Farmers & Merchants Bank & Trust

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dr. Michael Ash

Southeastern Community College

Jon Billups

City of Burlington

Tom Broeker

Des Moines County Board of Supervisors

Bryan Bross

Klingner & Associates

Gary Hoyer

Great River Entertainment

Brock Ita

Connection Bank

Gregg Mandsager

City of West Burlington

Braden Manning

CNH Industrial

Dr. Mike McCoy

Great River Health Systems

Kevin Mueller

KPI Concepts, LLC

Ryan Nagrocki

Midwest Realty Group

Mark Seckman

Alliant Energy

Chris Smith

Carl A. Nelson & Company

Paul Zaugg

SG Construction

Grow Greater Burlington, Inc.

Bringing Business *home*



Western Smokehouse Partners Ribbon Cutting



Iowa Army Ammunition Plant Modernization Summit

- Western Smokehouse Partners was welcomed to the Flint Ridge Business Park with over 120 jobs created, and over \$20 million in capital investments.
- Completed a comprehensive Housing Needs Assessment for Des Moines County, and in collaboration with the Chamber of Commerce established a Housing taskforce to pursue the housing goals identified.
- Successfully brought Toba Foods to the Greater Burlington Area with over \$16 million in capital investments expected, and a projected 120 jobs created beginning in 2024.
- Initiated and hosted the IAAAP modernization summit to prepare the region for the benefits and challenges ahead as the U.S. Army and American Ordnance plan a significant modernization project at one of our area's largest employers.
- Sold 12 Acres in the Flint Ridge Business Park for continued investment, bringing the park to 78% occupied.
- Established strong ties to the new owner of the former ABB building in West Burlington (Phoenix Investors) and hosted numerous tenants interested in repurposing this facility.
- Realized the goal of the Imagine Campaign from a decade ago to have two best in class sports tournament facilities in the state of Iowa. Significant financial and employee contributions from Grow Greater Burlington to help see the projects to fruition.

MISSION: The Economic Development division exists to add and retain jobs and grow the tax base of Des Moines County.



Yair Carvajal, Board Chair
Queso's Mexican Bar & Grill

In 2023, the Convention and Visitors Bureau achieved significant milestones that continue to build on its strong foundation and continue to transform the region into a more vibrant tourist hub. The new stand-alone tourism guide will cater to, assist, and attract more visitors to our area, while promoting all of the amazing local businesses and attractions in our community. The Grow Your Event Grant has doubled the number of applicants this year, which I'm incredibly excited about. Of course, one of the highlights of the year was the grand opening of FunCity Courts, a recreational complex that is quick to become a regional favorite, attracting athletes and families alike to our basketball, volleyball, and pickleball courts year-round. The Convention and Visitors Bureau's achievements in 2023 not only contributed to the city's economic prosperity but also solidified Greater Burlington's standing as a dynamic and inviting community.

OFFICER

Chairperson

Yair Carvajal, Queso's Mexican Bar & Grill

STEERING COMMITTEE

Michelle Caston

Mann's McDonald's L.C.

Andy Crowner

City of West Burlington

Ryan Gourley

City of Burlington

Sara Huston

Great River Entertainment

Chris Lee

Des Moines County Conservation

Jim Priebe

Burlington Municipal Band Foundation

Brien Reynolds

Great River Entertainment

Andrew Ryerson

Greater Burlington Area Sports Facilities

Don Weiss

Des Moines County Historical Society

Convention & Visitors Bureau



Viking River Cruises Docking



Brent Slocum Foundation receives Sports Grant



Burlington Regional RecPlex

Bringing 2023 Success *home*

- Received the Iowa Tourism Grant for “Do More on 34,” a 2024 regional marketing collaboration with Iowa communities along Highway 34.
- Awarded a \$70,000 RSAD Sports Grant for fiscal year 2024, a 40% increase over 2022.
- Created Burlington Bound, a monthly e-newsletter focusing on events and attractions that will entice travelers to visit Greater Burlington.
- Created a tourism e-blog, Backyard Travelers of Greater Burlington, with a focus on driving visitation to the Greater Burlington Partnership website.
- Completed the design of the 2024 Greater Burlington Visitors Guide, the CVB’s first publication devoted exclusively to tourism.
- With 14 riverboat dockings, including 11 by Viking Mississippi, Greater Burlington welcomed nearly twice the number of passengers as 2022.
- The focus on social media increased visitation to CVB Facebook pages, resulting in year-over-year growth of 318% for Visit Burlington Iowa, and 526% for the Port of Burlington Welcome Center.

MISSION: The Greater Burlington Convention & Visitors Bureau is dedicated to marketing and promoting the Greater Burlington community as a premier destination to both leisure and business travelers.



Mercedes Ponce, Board Chair
Titan Broadcasting

2023 has been a year of immense growth and expansion for our wonderful Downtown. The year started off with a bang as the new Downtown Destination Brand was rolled out: Downtown Burlington, It's Happening! While the T.I.G.E.R. construction roared through the streets of Downtown, and the community showed up to support the businesses affected and business owners pivoted, remodeled, and adapted to the ongoing changes. Downtown Burlington became home to over 20 NEW businesses in 2023, 10 of which are in previously vacant locations. Over 25 million dollars has been invested in Downtown this year alone and I am so proud of the progress and continued growth of our Downtown as we head into 2024.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Todd Ackerman

World Insurance

Chad Bird

City of Burlington

Tom Burch

Farmers & Merchants Bank & Trust

Alec Cornick

Universal Fitness

Todd Darnall

McConnell Lofts

Jessica Gerling

City of Burlington

Lynda Graham-Murray

City of Burlington

Jerilyn Horn

Jerilyn Horn Kitchen & Bath

Design Company

Brittany Jacobs

Burlington Public Library

Elizabeth Pappas

Art Center of Burlington

Mercedes Ponce

Titan Broadcasting & Digital Group

Chelsea Stevens

Burlington Vintage & Co.

Kansha Tiwari

Southeast Iowa Regional

Planning Commission

Vanessa Watson

Great River Health

Suann Wells

The Beancounter

Coffeehouse & Drinkery

OFFICERS

Chairperson

Mercedes Ponce

Titan Broadcasting

Chairperson - Elect

Todd Ackerman

World Insurance

Past Chair

Todd Darnall

McConnell Lofts

Treasurer

Tom Burch

Farmers & Merchants

Bank & Trust

Downtown Partners, Inc.

A MAIN STREET IOWA PROGRAM

Bringing Bragging Rights *home*



A Very Vintage Market



*Burlington Black Water LLC wins
Main Street Iowa Challenge Grant*



Downtown Burlington Trick or Treat

- Downtown Destination Brand launched with “Downtown Burlington, It’s Happening!” This vibrant brand is helping with marketing to create tourism and create community pride.
- Sale of 300 Washington for redevelopment!
- Downtown Burlington was designated as a Cultural and Entertainment District by the State of Iowa to give marketing opportunities, promotional programs, and technical assistance from the Department of Cultural Affairs.
- Main Street Iowa recognized Kay Weiss as Volunteer of the Year during the Main Street Iowa Development Awards Celebration.
- The Main Street Iowa Challenge Grant was awarded to Burlington Black Water LLC to bring indoor Miniature Golf and an Ice Cream Parlor to the Downtown.
- Main Street Iowa awarded Downtown Burlington a grant to bring Lyn Falk, Visual Merchandiser Specialist, to meet with Downtown businesses to improve their sales and storefronts.
- Main Street Iowa funded and supported four training sessions with Google Specialist for “Grow with Google” trainings.

MISSION: Downtown Partners, Inc. is a volunteer-driven Main Street Program established to preserve and revitalize Downtown Burlington while improving the quality of life for the community.

BURLINGTON
WEST BURLINGTON
CHAMBER
OF
COMMERCE

62 New Members as of December 7, 2023

35 Ribbon Cuttings as of December 1, 2023

Approximately **200** shoppers participated
in **8** Cash Mobs across Greater Burlington

Annual Dinner increased profitability
by **36%**

Golf Classic increased profitability
by **45%**

THE PARTNERSHIP
2023 YEAR IN REVIEW

\$55 Million in private capital investment
in 2023

\$21 Million in non-private (government)
capital investment in 2023

180+ new housing units either open, or
nearing completion this year

2,300+ students engaged in STEM fields,
career fairs, and career exploration tools

GROW
GREATER
BURLINGTON,
INC.

CONVENTION
&
VISITORS
BUREAU

Tourism in Des Moines County generated **\$170** million, contributing **\$27.1** million in state and local taxes

Supported local events through the CVB Grow Your Event Grant, generating an estimated economic impact of over **\$1.4** million

Explored new digital marketing, resulting in over **1.3** million impressions/engagements

DOWNTOWN
PARTNERS,
INC.

22 New Businesses Opened in Downtown Burlington in 2023. **10** of these were in locations that have been vacant for years if not decades

3 Buildings sold in Downtown Burlington with unique businesses that are coming to make the Downtown even more vibrant

\$25 Million in investment in the Downtown (does NOT include TIGER Project)

Thank you Partnering for the Future III Investors

Titanium Division



Platinum Division

Big River Resources, LLC
City of Burlington
Des Moines County
Board of Supervisors

Silgan Containers
Standard of Beaverdale
TriOak Foods, LLC
John H Witte Foundation

Gold Division

ABB
Rick Buller
Financial Services
City of West Burlington
Great River Entertainment
First Intersate Bank
Ideal Ready Mix Company

ITC Midwest
MidWestOne Bank
MTC Technologies
SG Construction
Shearer's Snacks
Shottenkirk Superstore
U.S. Bank, N.A.

Silver Division

3E Electrical Engineering and
Equipment Co.
Access Energy Cooperative
Afinitas
Aspelmeier, Fisch, Power,
Engberg & Helling, P.L.C.
Brinck Investment, LLC
Bruner, Cooper & Zuck, Inc.
Burlington Trailways
Carl A. Nelson & Company
Caston Holdings, Inc.
Century 21 Property Professionals
City of Mediapolis
CNH Industrial America, LLC
Connection Bank
Jerry Courtney
Davis Radiology
Deery Brothers, Inc.

Eastern Iowa Light and Power
Cooperative, Inc.
Federal Mogul Ignition LLC,
A Tenneco Group Company
Farmers Savings Bank
Forefront Dermatology
Huffman's Farm & Home
Klingner & Associates, P.C.
Kozlowski Law Group, LLC
KPI Concepts, LLC
Mann's McDonald's L.C.
Menke & Company
Midwest Realty Group, Inc.
Myers Construction, Inc.
Myers Design Studio
Northeast Missouri Electric
Power Cooperative, Inc.
Northwestern Mutual
Jerry Courtney

Pierson Inc.
Sherwood Company, Inc.
Southeastern Community College
Spearfish Development, LLC
State Farm Insurance
Matt Rinker Agency
Summer Street Animal Clinic
TDT CPAs and Advisors
The Drake, LLC
Thielen Enterprises, Inc.
U.S. Gypsum
Valley Distribution Corporation
Winegard Company
World Insurance Associates, LLC
W.W. Transport, Inc.
Zaiser's Landscaping,
Florist & Greenhouse



PARTNERING *for the* Future III

5-Year Review

The Greater Burlington Partnership leads the community's efforts to accelerate the economy throughout the Greater Burlington area. As the largest convener of local business leadership, which includes several boards and committees comprised of key business and community leaders, the Partnership tackles the big issues and proactively drives economic and community growth.

Over the course of Partnering for the Future 2019 - 2023, the Partnership has delivered significant accomplishments.

Talent Development

- 1,883 students attended 5th – 8th grade career fairs.
- 3,870 students participated in the annual STEM Festival (not during the COVID shutdown).

Economic Development

- 310 new jobs created.
- \$225 million in capital investment.

Downtown Redevelopment

- More than \$49 million in new investments for transformative Downtown projects.

Community Enhancement

- Commissioned and delivered updated Housing Needs Study.
- More than 3 million ad impressions were delivered, driving consumer traffic.

Visitor Attraction

- Awarded \$62,000 in grants to local nonprofits engaged in tourism-attracting events.
- Nearly 7.8 million ad impressions running through 2023, driving visitors to Greater Burlington.
- Due to new Viking River Cruises, the Riverboat dockings increasing threefold from 2019.



CONTACT US

If you would like additional information about the Greater Burlington Partnership visit us online or contact us directly.