



## 2022 Annual Report

*Collaborating with the business and education communities and continuing to build upon our unified mission to make the Sioux Falls area the best place to live, work and play, Forward Sioux Falls 2026 initiatives from 2022 have set an impressive tone and will continue to be key to our region's future success in 2023. This collective impact focus on our five-year goals which include adding 4,500 new, direct jobs at above median wage, \$500 million in new capital investments, \$250 million in new property tax revenues, 300+ acres of land sold/developed and 300 existing companies assisted.*

### ***Focus areas include:***

- *Talent Attraction, Retention and Development*
- *Business Retention, Expansion and Attraction*
- *Innovation and Entrepreneurship*
- *Business Advocacy/Quality of Place Enhancement*
- *Air Service*

### **Talent Attraction, Retention and Development**

Direct Workforce Connections measure how many participants are involved annually in one of Sioux Falls Development Foundation's 13 Talent and Workforce programs. In 2022, 17,312 people including 141 Forward Sioux Falls Investor businesses directly participating.

- Digital impressions are created through recruitment and engagement campaigns measuring the number of touchpoints designed to "lift up" and sell Sioux Falls. In fiscal year 2022, workforce programs created 9.4 million digital impressions.
- Relationships created with post-secondary educational partners provide career advice and guidance to early career persons. In fiscal year 2022 collegiate partnerships were expanded to 304 colleges and universities and 2.4 million students due to partnerships with Handshake and the South Dakota Association of College Career Centers.
- Experiential programs using job shadows and internships connected early career talent to Forward Sioux Falls Investor businesses. The Career Connections program helped 87% of participating graduating seniors prepare to become first-generation college students, including

eight Build Dakota Scholars. In 2022, 466 students were connected to 71 Forward Sioux Falls Investor businesses.

*The following initiatives attributed to these outcomes:*

- **Talent Tours**
  - College students toured businesses in the Sioux Falls area to connect them with high-demand industries and jobs.
- **Talent Now**
  - Special events for soon-to-be college graduates to help connect them to employment opportunities quickly
- **Talent Draft Day**
  - One-day event for middle school, high school and college students to immerse them in opportunities available in Sioux Falls
- **Talent Rebound**
  - Events to reach college alumni who have relocated from South Dakota by connecting these prospective 'rebounders' to current residents and businesses
- **Intern Sioux Falls**
  - Connects college sophomores and juniors from the upper Midwest to organizations with internship opportunities
- **Talent Thursdays**
  - Weekly live stream on social media featuring a Sioux Falls professional sharing their career journey and why Sioux Falls is a great place to live
- **Career Connections**
  - A weekly job shadowing experience that immerses high school juniors and seniors into high-demand careers in Sioux Falls
- **Your Future STEM**
  - Helping middle school students understand pathways and job opportunities within STEM-related careers that are poised for growth
- **Opportunity and Capability Workshops**
  - A one-day job fair designed for students and adults with disabilities to gain career education and exposure and to raise awareness of the benefits of employing people with disabilities
- **Second Chance Job Fairs**
  - Seeks to connect justice-involved persons with employment opportunities upon their release
- **Upskill Sioux Falls**
  - Provides employee training and development in high-demand and hard to fill occupations
- **Recruitment Council**
  - Monthly workshops on the topics of hiring, retaining and developing the right employees for your organization
- **WIN in Workforce**
  - 640 onsite attendees, as well 151 virtual attendees shared best workforce practices, networked and engaged with community and business leaders
- **WORK Sioux Falls** is a digital marketing campaign that conveys the message that Sioux Falls is a great place to live and work. Visitors to the site are directed to a listing of local employers who have available positions. Campaign impacts included 9.2 million

impressions, nearly 841,000 interactions, 81,500 website visits and 5,700 employer card clicks.

- **Health Sciences Clinical Simulation Center**

Forward Sioux Falls was instrumental in the creation of the Health Sciences Clinical Simulation Center on the campus of Southeast Technical College, which will expand the available workforce for health sciences in the region. Located at the former Zeal Center building, the Simulation Center will provide hands-on training for nurses, sonographers, surgical techs, paramedics and lab techs. The expected operational date for the facility is fall 2023.

- **Sioux Falls Thrive**, is a collaborative effort among the United Way, the Sioux Falls Area Chamber of Commerce, the Sioux Falls Development Foundation and the Sioux Falls Area Community Foundation that optimizes educational achievement from cradle to career. Critical steps have been identified to improve housing, food security, childcare, and youth development. “Kid Link,” which identifies needs and wants of families in underserved neighborhoods, aims to positively impact and measure change in student performance by realigning community resources. Three schools have been included from the past year (Riverside, Terry Redlin and Jane Adams).

- **REACH Literacy** provides literacy instruction and experiences for adult and youth readers each year through ground-breaking tutoring programs and the innovative use of donated books in a secondhand bookstore. Workplace literacy is a vital component of advancing our economy and therefore, Forward Sioux Falls is proud to assist this organization. This past year, tutoring resumed at Sanford and Avera health systems and included such areas as housekeeping, maintenance, food service and laundry. Approximately 40 employees are utilizing the program, with approximately 15 unique languages being spoken.

A significant expansion of their existing space will allow pre-CNA and Medi-Aide tutoring, as well as the addition of a computer lab. REACH will also explore the possibility to offer assistance (how to take the test, words they encounter, etc.) to those English-language learners who are applying for a driver's license help. In 2023 REACH will seek to add more businesses to the list of clients.

## **Business Recruitment, Retention & Expansion**

**Foundation Park**, the largest industrial park that the Sioux Falls Development Foundation has developed, continues to evolve. At present, 231 acres have been sold, comprising eight tenants.

With the south part of the park being built out, attention to infrastructure needs for future development north of the railroad tracks has begun. This includes 1.6 million cubic yards of grading, opening up 270 acres of build-ready sites. An additional 100 acres were acquired to the North of Foundation Park to bring the total acreage to 960 acres. In addition, the SFDF purchased 135 acres east of I-29, adjacent to Kiwanis Avenue. This will serve as long-term inventory and allow for expansion for industrial development once land in Foundation Park is completely built out.

**Sioux Empire Development Park VIII East** had four land sales in 2022, which leaves only a four-acre lot remaining. The South Dakota National Guard acquired 62 acres to build their Readiness Center in **Sioux Empire Development Park VIII West**. This industrial park also had \$3 million of

grading completed, which opened up 86 acres of build ready land. In addition, North Bahnson Avenue was completed that now connects 60<sup>th</sup> St. North to East Benson Rd.

The Sioux Falls Development Foundation's **Business Retention & Expansion (BR&E) initiative** is an economic development strategy to proactively connect with existing businesses and create a strong environment for business growth.

Through its **Business Engagement Program**, the SFDF connected with over 300 companies in the past twelve months as part of their outreach. Through the process the SFDF records survey data to track area business conditions and identify opportunities. At the end of 2022, nearly 80% of responding businesses stated that overall business conditions at their organization were good or excellent; and over 82% stated the overall business climate in Sioux Falls was good or excellent.

In 2022 there were **20 businesses that conducted major expansion projects in four key sectors:** healthcare invested over \$113M, manufacturing \$46M, financial \$17M, and warehousing & transportation \$11M.

Working collaboratively with the City of Sioux Falls, the SFDF continues its **Tax Incentive Policy Review** to revise and strengthen the limited economic development tools available in Sioux Falls. These programs will be able to assist growing industrial businesses as well as support new housing developments.

A strong effort to fortify relationships with **local brokers** has continued to strengthen over the past year through our **broker partnership agreement** which increases marketing visibility and lead generation for the Sioux Falls area.

**Digital marketing efforts** through the new **Work Sioux Falls** campaign strategically targeted outmigration states promoting the opportunities of living and working in Sioux Falls.

## **Entrepreneurship & Innovation**

**Startup Sioux Falls** empowers founders by cultivating a network of individuals, organizations, and stakeholders who support and share resources to promote innovation in the Sioux Falls region. Thriving startup ecosystems create jobs, attract and retain talent, spur local development, improve quality of life, increase tax revenue, and attract large companies.

Startup Sioux Falls merged with the Zeal Center for Entrepreneurship in 2020 and was rebranded in 2021 as Startup Sioux Falls. At that time, the organization embarked on a plan to vacate the Zeal Center and relocate to downtown Sioux Falls. Programs and services provided by Startup Sioux Falls include networking and educational events and workshops, a mentorship network, resource navigation services, a business accelerator program, and a coworking space that will open in February 2023.

In November 2021, Startup Sioux Falls received \$1 million through the SBA Community Navigator Pilot Program to bring business support to underserved entrepreneurs. The organization has used the two-year grant to provide its accelerator program, CO.STARTERS, and other resources to underserved communities through a hub and spoke model.

Startup Sioux Falls programs and services by the numbers (2022):

- 7,600+ members of the Startup Sioux Falls online community

- 3,000+ attendees at events
- 85+ people served through the resource navigation program
- 79 CO.STARTERS business accelerator graduates
- 65+ mentorship connections made
- 58 events held for entrepreneurs

Since 2019, Startup Sioux Falls leadership has focused on defining and executing its mission and vision, which has led to significant transformation within the organization and the broader startup community. With the completion of the move downtown, the organization will refocus on engaging stakeholders, refining a sustainable financial model, and meeting the needs of founders, including providing more support and infrastructure development for high-growth startups.

Over the next decade, Startup Sioux Falls will help 100 high-growth startups in the Sioux Falls region start their businesses and 10 high-growth startups scale their businesses, a move that will contribute to the diversification and innovation of the local economy.

Forward Sioux Falls also continued funding for the **USD Discovery District**, an 80-acre contemporary corporate and academic research park under development in northwest Sioux Falls. The Discovery District also received funding in 2022 from the State of South Dakota, the City of Sioux Falls and other supporters to construct its first BioSciences building. This multi-tenant building will include laboratories, office space, and shell space for current and future tenants.

Partnering with Dakota State University, Sanford Health, Denny Sanford, the City of Sioux Falls and the State of South Dakota, Forward Sioux Falls provided funding to launch a **DSU Cyber Security Research Center** in Sioux Falls. Project estimates show the potential for 400-500 high paying jobs once completed. Ultimately, the hope is that the research center will become a cyber incubator and put our state on the map nationally and internationally in the cybersecurity realm.

## **Business Advocacy & Quality of Place Enhancement**

Supporting advocacy efforts to enhance the business climate and quality of life has been a fundamental program supported by Forward Sioux Falls. Staff from the Greater Sioux Falls Chamber of Commerce (GSFCC) are **actively engaged to ensure the voice of business is heard**. Business **advocacy at the local level** includes the Sioux Falls City Council, Minnehaha County Commission, and the Sioux Falls School Board. Along with a weekly podcast, the weekly publication *Chamber Advocate*, communicates important proceedings from these meetings.

A **full-time lobbyist** is assigned to the South Dakota Legislative Session to monitor and act upon bills affecting the greater Sioux Falls area businesses by effectively communicating these positions to our state legislators. A **Legislative Annual Report** can be found on the GSFCC website that provides an in-depth analysis of our advocacy work in Pierre, which includes the **Legislative Scorecard**. The GSFCC provides weekly updates during the Legislative Session to our membership about specific legislation through a **Bill Tracker**. In February, Sioux Falls Day at the Legislature is conducted to advance pro-Sioux Falls legislation and learn more about how to get involved in the legislative process. In addition, GSFCC works closely with South Dakota's congressional delegation in Washington D.C., including the facilitation of three "**Inside Washington**" events, as well as an annual Washington **D.C. Fly-in** where we engage our Congressional delegation on topics important to our investors.

The Chamber's Public Policy Staff hosts three **legislative coffees, multiple candidate forums and ballot measure forums for members** and the general public. These important events provide voters the opportunity to become better acquainted with the elected officials who serve them and issues important to the business community. The **Young Professionals Network (YPN)** continue to encourage our young professionals to become more civically engaged. A politically informed and engaged citizenry leads to a strong and thriving community.

Within the past year, the Chamber introduced a new initiative called the **Diversity, Equity and Inclusivity (DE&I) Activator Series**. DE&I practices can lead to a number of benefits for a business including increased innovation, improved decision-making, better problem-solving, enhanced reputation, and stronger customer relationships. Over the course of 11 sessions, the Chamber engaged 266 local companies and 372 professionals. Well over 1,500 hours have already been dedicated to this initiative and that number continues to grow as we expand the series' scope.

We will continue to support programs and projects that enhance our economy by advocating for a strong quality of life, a robust business climate, programs that enhance workforce development and accessible housing.

The process to establish a ten-year roadmap for our community, **Vision Sioux Falls**, a community-wide long-range strategic plan, began this past summer. Forward Sioux Falls is collaborating with the City of Sioux Falls, Sioux Falls Area Community Foundation, Sioux Empire United Way and the Sioux Falls Public School District to design and oversee the plan's formation.

To date, listening sessions, one-on-one interviews, community roundtables and a survey have been conducted. Additional opportunities for community members to participate and provide input will be offered over the next few months. A dynamic website to engage residents and provide meaningful input and feedback has been established. Vision Sioux Falls is scheduled to be completed by summer 2023 with action items, stakeholders and timelines identified.

### **Air Service**

In Sioux Falls, we are fortunate to have an incredible airport that continues to provide exceptional recreational and business travel opportunities to hundreds of thousands of people annually. Throughout multiple Forward Sioux Falls programs, we have partnered with the Sioux Falls Regional Airport to market the advantages for leisure and business travelers alike, to utilize services FSD provides.

From January-November 2022, passenger enplanements—those departing from FSD—totaled 563,555 which is 24 percent ahead of 2021 and 6.8 percent better than 2019, which was also a record year. **Total passengers for the year are expected to exceed 1.2 million for the year, an all-time record.**

Updates from the past year include Allegiant Airlines helping to drive the increase in traffic with new service to Ft. Lauderdale, Nashville, Austin, San Diego and Orange County/Santa Anna, CA. Frontier Airlines also added seasonal service to Las Vegas and Orlando. Total available seats increased 6.2% from 2021.

