"I see nothing but greatness coming out of this. Now that we’ve got the brand, let’s go sell it."

Tom Vilsack, United States Secretary of Agriculture
April 21, 2014

After an incredible amount of exploration, planning and discussion with experts and stakeholders from around the country, the Cultivation Corridor launched in April 2014, thereby marking the formal beginning of its mission to promote central Iowa and the state at large as a world-class destination for research, capital investment and higher learning in the agbioscience, agribusiness and agtechnology industries.

In just twelve months the Cultivation Corridor has gone from concept to concrete, and has accomplished much as it establishes itself as one of the most pressing economic development initiatives Iowa has ever seen.

As we continue to build and promote the Cultivation Corridor initiative, the partnerships we’ve forged are yielding promising new opportunities for our region and for the state. And as more and more people around the country begin to see, hear and learn about the Corridor name, we can expect the resulting benefits to our cause, and for the world, to grow exponentially.

The information included within this report is indicative of the leaps and bounds the Cultivation Corridor has made in the past year, and stands as a testimony to the power of regional collaboration. The data is impressive, and it is owed to the many new friends, supporters and partners the Corridor has gained across the state, the nation and overseas. I am honored and pleased to present the Cultivation Corridor’s 2014 Annual Report: From the Ground Up.

John May, Chairman
LAUNCHING APRIL 21, 2014
Nearly all of the critical ingredients exist to fuel a giant leap forward within this defined space, leading to the belief among many within the region that this area can emerge as the next national innovation corridor in the United States.
– Cultivation Corridor Vision Document

LAUNCHING THE CULTIVATION CORRIDOR

18 TOTAL MONTHS OF PRE-LAUNCH ACTIVITIES

5 POTENTIAL BRAND IDENTITIES TESTED

20 IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED WITH INDUSTRY EXPERTS AND KEY STAKEHOLDERS

614 SURVEY RESPONDENTS FROM 33 MAJOR MARKETS ACROSS THE NATION

300,000 DOLLARS INVESTED BY PARTNERS FOR EARLY BRAND PLANNING

SEATED BOARD
Established one of the state's highest-level boards of directors.

DESIGNATED ADVISORS
Counseled by an accomplished team of state leaders.

HIRED STAFF
Appointed an executive director and hired a communications intern.

OFFICES
Established physical locations in Des Moines and Ames.

$700k FUNDING CAMPAIGN
Established budget and fundraised to support first-year programming.

TRADEMARKS
Registered three trademarks to protect brand identity investment.

PLOTTING A COURSE
Developed and adopted three-year strategic and one-year tactical work plans.

FRAMEWORK
Engineered formal legal, administrative and organizational infrastructures.

MARKET INTELLIGENCE
Established national market research protocol to ensure brand campaign effectiveness.
BRANDING AND MARKETING
The Cultivation Corridor brand identity was developed to be the first single, multidisciplinary and collaborative message to be taken to the marketplace to define central Iowa as a global center of agbioscience investment, talent and research excellence.

GOING ONLINE
Launched cultivationcorridor.org to serve as the Corridor’s digital platform.

EXTERNAL MARKETING
Delivered an array of branded collateral into the marketplace.

STAKEHOLDER COMMUNICATIONS
Established a stakeholder communications infrastructure to engender regional collaboration.

BRAND MANAGEMENT
Published formal brand guidelines and usage standards.

PAID MEDIA
Introduced the Corridor brand to targeted audiences across the nation.

197 EARNED MEDIA
Appeared in 197 articles from national and international publications, including those from Canada, Israel and Spain.

TRAVEL
Traversed 39,000 miles to represent the region at 17 tradeshows, expos and dedicated marketing trips.

NEWSLETTER
Established a monthly communications platform through cultivationcorridor.org to apprise stakeholders of Corridor activities, coverage and opportunities.

FOUNDING STAKEHOLDERS

[Images of company logos]
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Thanks to formal strategic partnerships with a number of state and regional economic development entities, the Cultivation Corridor is at work improving Iowa’s economic competitiveness through innovative ag investment attraction and awareness strategies.

REGIONAL PROMOTION

Deployed messaging to highlight more than 20 agribusiness, agbioscience and agtechnology projects, representing more than $1.83 BILLION in central Iowa activity since April 2014.

BREAKING GROUND

ISU RESEARCH PARK | Broke ground on Phase III of its expansion with infrastructure investments and a $12M economic development hub in Ames (the future home of the Cultivation Corridor).

KEMIN INDUSTRIES | Broke ground on a $125M, 140-job headquarters and R&D expansion in Des Moines.

BOEHRINGER INGELHEIM VETMEDICA | Broke ground on a $22M research facility at the ISU Research Park.

RIBBON CUTTING

MONSANTO | Opened the doors of its Huxley Learning Center for advanced training and education in Huxley.

DUPONT PIONEER | Began operations at the Crick Research Center in Johnston, a new 180,000 square foot lab and office facility that will house 400 employees.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BARILLA GROUP | Announced plans to expand its Ames facility with a new $27M manufacturing and food processing plant.

LEAD DEVELOPMENT

Directly or collaboratively responsible for 19 economic development leads and projects that were pursued by regional development partners.

“We have to be the very best at what we claim to be, not in Iowa, but in the entire world. It’s an audacious task, but today, we’re prepared to pound that stake into the ground.”

Dr. Steve Zumbach, Capital Corridor Co-Chairman
April 21, 2014
STRATEGIC INNOVATION
The Cultivation Corridor is developing programming in close coordination with regional and statewide industry and research stakeholders to support innovation, attract resources and build capacity for Iowa’s agribusiness, agbioscience and agtechnology sectors.

MAPPING OUR ASSETS
Established the Iowa Project Partnership, a diverse statewide coalition to fund and oversee the development of the state’s first agribusiness and biotechnology asset inventory database.

INCUBATING NEW BUSINESS
Established ongoing partnerships with the Greater Des Moines Partnership and the Iowa Innovation Corporation to commission and implement the recommendations of the Iowa Biotechnology Incubator Assessment as it relates to accelerating central Iowa agribusiness startup activity.

ADVOCACY
Supported and advocated for public policy important to the industry, including Iowa’s bio-based chemical tax credit proposal and the federal government’s ongoing patent policy reform debate.

SPEAKING TO AN INTERNATIONAL AUDIENCE
Over the course of presenting to more than 50 audiences and more than 3,000 people, the Cultivation Corridor promoted its message of agribusiness investment, talent and research excellence to individuals, companies and institutions across the world.

CANADA
Represented Iowa on a Canada-U.S. Ag Innovation Roundtable at the invitation of Canada’s Governor General to discuss transnational agtechnology trade and research opportunities.

CHINA
Co-hosted an investment delegation from China’s Ministry of Agriculture to discuss the investment, regulatory, workforce and collaborative research environment for foreign direct investment in Iowa.

ISRAEL
Hosted an Israeli trade delegation and executed a trade MOU between the Cultivation Corridor and the Israeli Chamber Federation focused on ag exports and agtechnology partnerships.

GREAT BRITAIN
Hosted the British Consul General from Chicago for discussions with Iowa companies regarding the United Kingdom’s national agtechnology strategy.

KOSOVO
Co-hosted a business and government delegation from Kosovo to discuss U.S. agricultural co-development opportunities.