

David Wilwerding  
2016 Business Record Forty Under 40 Nomination

## **Executive Summary**

David Wilwerding should be given full consideration for the 2016 Business Record Forty Under 40. David is an advocate for professional planners through both his professional and civic accomplishments. As the Community Development Director for the City of Johnston, he has successfully managed the significant growth the community has seen in his time there as well as championed impactful projects for the City. Included in the many projects are a Watershed Assessment and Stormwater Management Plan which received the 2010 Iowa Water Conference Award for a Watershed Plan and the Merle Hay Road Gateway Redevelopment Plan which was awarded the American Planning Association Iowa Chapter Award for Innovation in Economic Development and Planning in 2014.

Through his role at the City of Johnston, David uses his expertise on several boards and commissions. He serves on the Planning Subcommittee, Transportation Technical Committee and Water Trails Steering Committee through the Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization. David also serves on the board for the Walnut Creek Watershed Management Authority and has represented the City of Johnston on several of the Greater Des Moines Partnership's D.C. Trips.

With a desire to give back the institution that introduced him to planning, David is a lecturer for the Community and Regional Planning Department at Iowa State University. Planning students fill the courses taught by David with the desire to seek real world planning experience from an experienced, well respected professional. David is able to mentor the future city planners of Iowa and the nation through the Senior Planning Studio and Site Development classes he continues to teach.

Since 1999, David has been actively involved in the American Planning Association and the local American Planning Association Iowa Chapter. These organizations have a desire to provide education and leadership in the development of great communities through great planning and citizen empowerment. He was appointed to the Iowa Chapter board in 2004 and has served in many capacities including a six year Presidential Term. During the two years as president, David made an impact on the organization through providing additional educational opportunities, better service to members, and increased the partnership with the planning programs at Iowa State University and University of Iowa. The value to members was increased resulting in a better fiscal state of the Chapter as well as increased membership of planners across the State of Iowa. David continues to be a great resource to the Chapter board and members and gratefully serves at any capacity that he is called to perform. Due to his professional expertise and work with the APA – Iowa Chapter he also served on the Iowa Smart Planning Taskforce which was charged with providing recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly regarding local and regional planning issues. David also mentored Planning and Zoning Commissioners, City Council Members and Board of Adjustment members across the state through his work on the steering committee for the Iowa Planning Officials Academy.

Outside of planning, his mentorship role is strong as he has ten years of experience with the Johnston Community School District Youth Mentoring Program (JUMP). Through this program, David met with students weekly to set goals, increase basic skills and improve attitudes through a positive role model relationship. David is also actively involved at Our Lady's Immaculate Heart Church in Ankeny that he attends with his wife, Janet and their two children, Caroline and Ryan. David balances his professional and civic engagements and when not involved in those activities he enjoys spending time with his family, traveling, and rooting for the Cyclones.

**Nominee name**

David Wilwerding

**Current position**

Community Development Director

**Company/organization**

City of Johnston

**Company phone number**

515-727-7775

**Company address**

6221 Merle Hay Road  
Johnston, IA 50131

**Email address**

[dwilwerding@cityofjohnston.com](mailto:dwilwerding@cityofjohnston.com)

**Age (as of 3/30/16)**

38

**Birthdate**

January 18, 1978

**Colleges attended and degrees earned**

David Wilwerding attended Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa from 1996 to 2000 and received a Bachelor of Science Degree with Distinction in Community and Regional Planning. He was a member of the Golden Key International Honor Society to recognize his scholastic achievement during his undergraduate studies at Iowa State. David was also a member of the Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society for his superior dedication to academics during his tenure at Iowa State.

Following eight years in the professional world, David furthered his education by attending Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa to receive a Master's Degree in Public Administration. David continued his commitment to excellence while at Drake University and was a member of the Pi Alpha Alpha National Honor Society.

**Family**

David and his wife Janet, who is the Development and Communications Specialist for the City of Pleasant Hill, reside in Ankeny with their two children, Caroline 4 and Ryan 2 1/2. David is a longtime mentor with the JUMP program through the Johnston Community School District. David is actively involved as a commentator at Our Lady's Immaculate Heart Church in Ankeny. When David is not at work he enjoys spending time with his family, traveling and attending sporting events at Iowa State University.

**Business accomplishments**

Through David's sixteen year career as a professional planner, he has achieved many significant accomplishments for the organizations where he has been employed. As a new professional, he made his impact at the Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization which continues to be on the cutting edge of promoting good planning in the Des Moines Metro region. Looking to further advance his career, David started at the City of Johnston in 2002. He worked his way from

City Planner to Community Development Director in less than five years at the City. During his time with the City of Johnston, he has successfully led the City through significant community growth as well as tactfully managed the economic downturn felt across all industries in 2008. David is currently responsible for managing 7.5 full time employees and managing the Community Development Department activities including planning and zoning, building inspection and permitting, code enforcement and community mapping. The department has an annual budget in excess of \$800,000. Major accomplishments that have been achieved for the City of Johnston that David has directly impacted include the Merle Hay Road Redevelopment Plan, Johnston 2030 Comprehensive Plan, Watershed Assessment and Stormwater Management Plan, Merle Hay Road Gateway Redevelopment Plan as well as many public infrastructure projects.

In his role at the City of Johnston, David also serves on many boards and commissions to further smart decisions for metro communities including the Planning Subcommittee, Transportation Technical Committee and Water Trails Steering Committee through the Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization. David also serves on the board for the Walnut Creek Watershed Management Authority. He has also provided professional representation for the City of Johnston through attending the Greater Des Moines Partnership's D.C. Trips for several years.

With a continued desire to give back to the planning community, David has been a lecturer for the Iowa State University Department of Community and Regional Planning since 2011. He has taught several different courses including the Senior Planning Studio and Site Development. Students continue to fill the courses taught by David each semester and are eager to work with a well respected professional planner. Through the course work, he provides great real world experience and mentoring to foster upcoming graduates to be knowledgeable planners ready to serve the communities across the State of Iowa and the nation.

### **Civic leadership**

Professionally, David Wilwerding has been an influential advocate for city planners across the state and the country for many years. As a member of the American Planning Association since 1999, David has been committed to the not-for-profit organizations mission for many years. APA is an "educational organization that provides leadership in the development of vital communities by advocating excellence in planning, promoting education and citizen empowerment, and providing the tools and support necessary to meet the challenges of growth and change." David recognized that to make an immediate impact through the organization, involvement in the local chapter was the key. The American Planning Association Iowa Chapter focuses on providing workshops and information to equip members with the most relevant and best information that is available in order to assist in "Making Great Communities Happen." His work started with conference planning committees and David was appointed to the Chapter Board as the Awards Coordinator from 2004 to 2008. Following his appointment, he was voted by the 400 plus members into the Presidential Term which constitutes two years as President Elect, two years as President and two years as Past President per the organizations guidelines. During his President term, David was on the National Chapter Presidents Council for the National Chapter of the American Planning Association. During his presidency, David was focused on enhancing and improving core member services to ensure members could see the value of APA. David specifically led the organization through By-Law amendments to expand and diversify the Chapter Board membership; strengthened the Chapter's support of the two Universities with Planning Accredited Board Planning Programs in the State of Iowa; implemented better educational opportunities for members including additional seminars, conferences, and lunch and learns; and expanded the communication efforts of the Chapter to provide additional information to members through the organizations website, newsletter, and Chapter listserve. During his time as President of the American Planning Association Iowa Chapter, David was able to grow the membership

numbers and improve the fiscal health of the Chapter despite the economic downturn. During his formal appointments to the Chapter Board, David also volunteered additional time through chairing and being a member of several Conference Planning Committees. Following the Past President term, David was appointed to the Leadership, Networking, and Professional Development Chair position which facilitates educational opportunities and events throughout the state for Chapter Members. However, David's most valuable contribution to the American Planning Association Iowa Chapter is the fountain of knowledge he provides to existing and new board members. David raised the professionalism and services the organization provides to its members and continues to keep current board members accountable to the mission of the Chapter.

Other civic opportunities David has been involved with include the Iowa Smart Planning Taskforce which was established following the Rebuild Iowa Advisory Commission's recommendations to assist in long-term recovery following many natural disasters that had occurred across the state. The taskforce provided support for local and regional planning issues, provided economic opportunities, provided resiliency to natural disasters, and enhanced the quality of life of Iowan's. The Iowa Smart Planning Taskforce was tasked with making recommendations regarding local and regional planning to the Governor and General Assembly.

David was on the Steering Committee that developed the Iowa Planning Officials Academy which was a 12 hour certificate program on the essential principles and practices of the land use process for Planning and Zoning Commissioners, City Council Members, and Board of Adjustment Members. The event was held in five locations around the state in 2007 by the Iowa State University Extension Community and Economic Development Program. Topics included the legal framework of planning and zoning, finding and working with planning information, meeting management and record keeping requirements, and operation of the zoning ordinance. As a steering committee member, David was able to influence the programming to educate involved Iowan's on the critical components of government participation and instructed several of the training sessions that were offered.

David has expanded his community involvement beyond the planning world and has also been involved with the Johnston Community School District Youth Mentoring Program (JUMP) for nearly 10 years. JUMP is an individual mentoring program with student's grades 5 through 12 during the school day to help students set goals. David provided a positive role model to Johnston youth to enhance basic skills and attitudes. David is also actively involved at Our Lady's Immaculate Heart Church in Ankeny serving as a Commentator among other roles.

### **Achievements, awards and special recognitions**

Dedicated to his professional development, David has been a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) since 2004. AICP is the only nationwide certification for professional planners and is offered through the American Planning Association. AICP requires intense academic qualifications, professional planning work experience, as well specific skills in order to best serve communities across the nation. David also holds a certification from the Federal Emergency Management Agency/Department of Homeland Security National Incident Management System.

His civic involvement through the American Planning Association Iowa Chapter has earned him two well deserved Outstanding Chapter Service Awards in 2009 and again in 2012. APA-Iowa Chapter has also recognized his professional accomplishments awarding the Merle Hay Road Gateway Redevelopment Plan the APA Iowa Award for Innovation in Economic Development and

Planning in 2014. The Watershed Assessment and Stormwater Management Plan won the 2010 Iowa Water Conference Award for a Watershed Plan.

David has been responsible for authoring many grant applications and lobbying materials which has provided over \$10 million in funding for public projects through Congressional Appropriations, Surface Transportation Program, Watershed Improvement Review Board and I-Jobs.

**Nominated by**

Madeline Sturms

**Company**

City of Pleasant Hill

**Title**

Senior Planner

**Phone Number**

515-309-9464