



Transforming Council Bluffs

THE 7th 2nd INITIATIVE

2021 Annual Report

THE 712 INITIATIVE

The 712 Initiative's vision is to make Council Bluffs a dynamic healthy community where families and businesses choose to live, work and play.

OUR MISSION:

The 712 Initiative is aimed at improving the economic vitality in redevelopment areas through investments in built environment, activating public spaces and delivering programs that increase social engagement and healthy lifestyles.

OUR GOALS:

The 712 Initiative prioritizes efforts along five primary goals.

- Build** quality housing and commercial stock
- Attract** new residents to Council Bluffs
- Connect** community members
- Engage** through neighborhood projects and events
- Sustain** organization through partnerships

STAFF:

Sheryl Garst, CEO
Lynn Dittmer, Director of Redevelopment
Tammie Dodge, Construction Project Manager
Katie Kyker, Director of Donor Relations and Communications
Turner Morgan, Neighborhood Coordinator
Emily Winckler, Director of Programming & Events



Transforming Council Bluffs. When we look back at 2021 that was the best description to describe what we felt this year encapsulated. From a wonderful tunnel of holiday lights on the 100 Block to fixing up dilapidated properties where families now call home, The 712 Initiative engine is full steam ahead and transforming our community block by block and neighborhood by neighborhood. And we simply could not have done it without you.

Thank you for rolling up your sleeves with us and sharing our vision for a stronger community. Whether we are transforming this community with energy and vibrancy by bringing together people to enjoy our incredible park amenities through the Farmers Market or BIKetober to increasing our tax base and adding quality safe and affordable housing options, we are building momentum together.

Although the grant writing investment raised (primarily on small grants) is an impressive \$633,387, what blew us all away was shattering last year's volunteer number. From 424 volunteers to 1,510 volunteers, a whopping 256% increase. Thank you for joining us, activating our mission, and transforming our community. You volunteers were moved by our vision and helped us deliver on our pilot program, the Housing Revitalization Fund.

We are proud to report that we successfully transformed seven single family homes addressing all major systems, totaling 9,583 SF. Our average home age was 1916, average sale was \$156,000 with a program tax base increase of 299%. Through our program these homes were sold on the open market to qualified buyers that were credit worthy but could not find a natural affordable home in the community otherwise.

The transformation of these renovations simply does not stop at the property line but transforms the entire neighborhood. This year The 712 Initiative was a recipient of an incredible \$253,000 angel anonymous donation for our AMP for Neighborhoods program, a direct homeowner assistance program that impacted more than 31 homeowners. We would especially like to thank our collaborative partners at Habitat for Humanity CB who assisted us on working with homeowners, lining up qualified contractors and coordinating volunteers to lift these homeowners and invest in the community's aging housing stock.

Also, with the State of Nebraska passing new gaming legislation this past year and our operations heavily dependent on our gaming economy through the Iowa West Foundation, we could not thank you financial supporters enough for supporting our small but mighty team so we can continue delivering over a dozen of programs and development projects to retain and attract individuals and families to our UNbelievable community.

Thank you for seeing the value in our community programming for the present day and future of Council Bluffs and helping us continue to stabilize our operations. Thank you for investing in our team so we can continue to invest in this community.

A handwritten signature of Sheryl Garst in black ink. The signature is stylized and cursive, with the first name 'Sheryl' and last name 'Garst' clearly visible.

Sheryl Garst, CEO

Your investment into the 712 is the hardest working dollar in town

2021 By The Numbers

1,510

volunteers contributing to community betterment

\$633,387

in grants awarded to infuse back into the community through our mission

18,845+

community members engaged through events and programming

2021 Events and Programs

BIKEtober in the Bluffs
BLOCKtober Fest
Celebrate CB's Black Squirrel Scavenger Hunt
Clean Sweep
CreekTop Gardens
Farmers Market
Council Bluffs

Monster Rock on the 100 Block
Movie Nights in CB
Shamrock Shuffle
Shoe Recycling Drive
Terrariums 101
Winterfest Makers Village

19,880 sq.ft.

under construction in downtown on the 500 block of West Broadway

18

multifamily units under construction in downtown

218

Black squirrels found during Celebrate CB

3

new commercial bays

1

New National Historic Landmark
12 Scott St.

30

AMP direct homeowner repair projects

450

5K Shamrock Shuffle runners

225

cyclists participating in BIKETober in the Bluffs

7

homes renovated through Housing Revitalization Program

81

adult and student gardeners at CreekTop Gardens

\$5,000

grant to create an urban prairie

3,500 lbs.
of trash cleaned up

Volunteer Impact

We Asked, You Answered:

In a single year our volunteer impact has grown from 424 to 1,510 volunteers, a **256%** increase. Our housing and neighborhoods needs resonated with many of you from demo day to landscaping. The group that has exceeded our expectations with housing time and time again was the **Lewis Central 8th Grade Leadership team**.

Due to 300% increase in installation costs, Christmas on the 100 Block was also saved due to many volunteers and donors including but not limited to **MidAmerican Energy, Powertech, Commonwealth Electric, TS Bank, Abraham Lincoln High School Baseball Team, Glory Days, Barleys Bar and Grill, and Children's Square** among many individuals and families.

Not many realize how much time and effort also goes into our events and the teams of volunteers it takes. Special thanks to **Iowa Western Community College cheer team** for setting up and tearing down EVERY single Farmer's Market as well as Winterfest.



VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR
Denise Keay



VOLUNTEER GROUP OF THE YEAR
Lewis Central Middle School's
Southwest Iowa Leadership



BUSINESS PARTNER OF THE YEAR
Barley's Bar and Grill

2021 GOOD NEIGHBOR AWARDS

Our annual volunteer awards recognize those who have gone above and beyond to help our organization through volunteer work in the year prior.

Thanks to Creighton Camerer at the Council Bluffs Public Library Makerspace for designing and 3-D printing this year's awards.



 **1,510**
volunteers

4,729
hours
volunteered 

\$134,966
impacted through
volunteer work



Photo provided by Tim Johnson,
The Daily Nonpareil

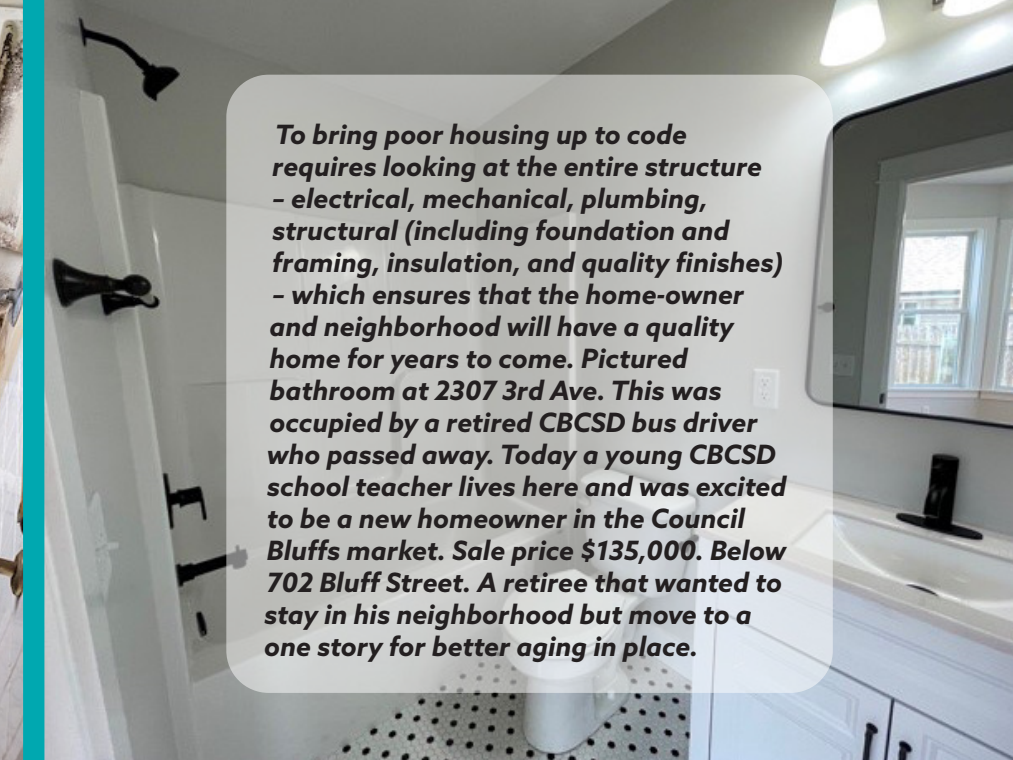
Pictured Above: Denise Keay was recognized for her outstanding work with the Iowa Total Care Creek Top Gardens. Lewis Central Middle School Southwest Iowa leadership first volunteered with us at 710 Bluff Street landscaping and the group came back to serve six times throughout the year, helping with demolition work, landscaping, assisting the Habitat for Humanity Restore, and making milkweed seed balls for our friends at Milkweed Matters. Matt Johnson, Barleys Bar and Grill service did not stop after he termed off our Board of Directors. His generosity, vision and service continues on as a Shamrock Shuffle sponsor and committee member, BIKetober sponsor and committee member and Housing Acquisition Committee member not to mention one of our largest donors for the 100 Block Holiday LED light and installation project.



In 2020, Abby & Yarden Medeiros opened their hearts to adoption and then found out they were also pregnant. Two babies in 6 months. Yarden is a respiratory therapist and has been working on the front lines since the pandemic. Due to many challenges and stressors of this past year, many home repairs were put on hold. Their neighbors, Jeff and Georgia Fuller have been in their home since 2008 and have always taken pride in their home repair projects. Recently they had to have a big tree removed and a side door installed on their garage. Soon after, Jeff lost his job due to COVID. While Georgia continued to work as a nurse, it was difficult to make ends meet. The new AMP for Neighborhoods direct homeowner repair program awarded these families a grant award to repair an aging cracked shared driveway. The program launched with a \$3,500 gift from TS Bank and exploded with an incredible \$253,000 anonymous donation to assist our well deserving working class families.



To bring poor housing up to code requires looking at the entire structure - electrical, mechanical, plumbing, structural (including foundation and framing, insulation, and quality finishes) - which ensures that the home-owner and neighborhood will have a quality home for years to come. Pictured bathroom at 2307 3rd Ave. This was occupied by a retired CBCSD bus driver who passed away. Today a young CBCSD school teacher lives here and was excited to be a new homeowner in the Council Bluffs market. Sale price \$135,000. Below 702 Bluff Street. A retiree that wanted to stay in his neighborhood but move to a one story for better aging in place.



Housing Revitalization Program 712 Single Family Program

712 is acquiring, renovating (or demolishing if needed) and selling on the open market, some of the area's most distressed properties. We look at the home from top to bottom, even the aging sewer line. When complete, the house is nearly new. We want to set the home and homeowner up for success - leaving no stone unturned. The largest expense comes from electrical, plumbing, mechanical, and structural improvements. Work is completed by licensed contractors and inspected by the City for an occupancy permit.



AMP for Neighborhoods 712 Homeowner Repair Program

TYPES OF PROJECTS
Exterior Paint - Stairs
Tree Trimming or Removal
Porch & Deck - Driveway
Gutters - Windows
Fence - Landscaping

30 Homeowners Impacted

Average Award **\$7,000**



Community Investment Impact

Without a nonprofit committed to community development and distressed properties, these investments would not be infused into our local Council Bluffs economy

\$5,017,298
secured for Phase II: 12 Scott St.

100% of
funding
for Phase I:
530 W. Broadway

\$8,000,000
\$7,000,000
\$6,000,000
\$5,000,000
\$4,000,000
\$3,000,000
\$2,000,000
\$1,000,000
\$0



FY 2021 ORGANIZATIONAL FUNDING



DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION	\$1,110,030
GRANTS/DONATIONS	\$1,012,926
LAND/BUILDING/HOUSE SALES	\$941,500
SPONSORSHIPS	\$39,271
EVENT PARTICIPATION FEES	\$32,404
OTHER	\$114,687

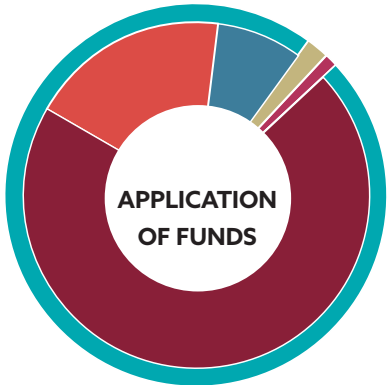
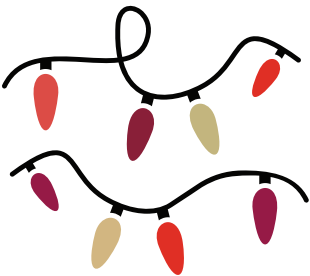
7 homes renovated with average tax base increase of

299%
Range of Homes sold:
\$129,000-182,000

\$5,000 Urban Prairie Grant
Union Pacific Foundation



\$6,585 Public Campaign
100 Block New Holiday Lights



Program expenses	97%
Administration	2%
Fundraising	1%
Programming breakdown:	
Redevelopment	78%
Neighborhood Activation	10%
Quality of Life	4%

*Unaudited numbers

40,574
sq ft
of renovated residential & commercial space



\$7,500 Google Grant
712 Organization
Contact Management Software

Percentage tax increase once renovation is complete
418%
530 W. Broadway: \$412,000 to \$2.13m
531%
12 Scott Street: \$246,500 to \$2.3m

PROJECT OVERVIEW

THE HOUSE 2307 S. 3rd Ave.
An existing 1,088 sq.ft. 2
beds, 1 bath built in 1920.

THE HOMEOWNER New
school teacher

THE SCOPE This home was
completely gutted and
redesigned. All structural
components and systems
were updated and inspected
as necessary per current city
code including plumbing,
electrical, and mechanical.

Roof repair and new
gutters installed

New paint
throughout the house

New siding installed

Total kitchen and bath
remodel with all new flooring,
cabinets, countertops,
hardware and appliances

Rebuilt front porch
and back deck

Original hardwood
floors were refinished

All new windows and doors

Concrete pad poured
for future garage

Master Gardeners provided
instruction and plant materials
for landscaping of the home

Moved laundry from
basement to main level

Installed a sump pump
in the basement

Removed badly damaged
street driveway and
restored curb



Quality of Life Programming

How do we as a community retain and attract a healthy sustainable workforce? Through quality programming. From activating our public parks with Farmer's Markets, Movie Nights, Downtown street fun runs, bike rides to a family fun Black Squirrel Scavenger Hunt, The 712 works on not only bringing to life old distressed properties but activating the districts we work in with activities for all ages.

THANK YOU - 2021 Donors

\$50,000+

Anonymous Donor
Community Development Block Grant
Iowa West Foundation
Southwest Iowa Foundation
US Bank Foundation

\$10,000 - \$49,999

Council Bluffs Housing Fund at the Pottawattamie County Community Foundation
First National Bank of Omaha
Steve and Patty Nogg
Pottawattamie County Housing Trust Fund
Union Pacific Foundation

\$5,000 - \$9,999

Alegent Health Mercy Hospital
American National Bank
Google - Tides Foundation
Home Matters Construction
Iowa Total Care
Pinnacle Bank
Union Pacific Foundation
WoodmanLife

\$1,000 - \$4,999

Availa Bank
Barleys Bar
Black Hills Energy
CB Construction
Centris Federal Credit Union
Dickinson Investments
Dick's Sporting Goods
Frontier Savings Bank
Glory Days
HGM Associates
Josh Kallsen
Leach Camper Sales
Midstates Bank, N.A.
NP Dodge
Christine Phillips
SilverStone Group
Snyder & Associates, Inc.
State Farm Insurance - Judd Knispel
TS Bank

\$500 - \$999

Kristen Blum
Fraternal Order of Police
Heartland Properties
Hy-Vee
J Development
Jerry Jares Family Fund
E. Lyle Kinley Jr
Andrea and John Marshall
Jeana Matcha
Pete and Deb Petersen
Real Property Management
Southwest Iowa Association of Realtors
Telpner Peterson Law Firm

\$100 - \$499

Jeannie Aldredge
Steve Argotsinger
Anthony Beraldi
Dr. Clifford and Deanna Boese
Career EdVantage
Edward Jones
Diane Carlon
Kelly Carman
Bryan and Amy Carolus
Steven and Teresa Chamley
Chiropractic Essence
Barry Cleaveland
Council Hitch
Creative Edge
Dan and Chrystal Dawson
Stephen and Rosemary Dermody
Annette Devine
Jacquelyn Dierks
Tammie Dodge
Donna and Larry Dostal
Michael Doyle
Dusted Charm
Mark Eckman
Edward Jones
Dorothy Engstrom
Robyn and Cole Epley
Elaine Fenner
Tim Galligan
Brandon Garrett
Brian Goss
Wyatt Greenwood
Amy Hallam
Mary Ann Hanusa and Charles Johnson
Jennifer and Pat Hensley
Hoy-Kilnoski Funeral Home
Larry Hutchinson
Abby Jares
Karen Jares and Warren Weber
Marcia Joffe-Bouska
Jim and Donna Kalar
Rick and Jill Killion
Steven Krohn
Chris and Lea LaFerla
Lone Tree Animal Care Center
Michael and Angela Long
Kathryn Marvin
Amy McDermott
Carrie McDonald
Mary Lou McGinn
Alison McGinn
McGinn Law Firm
Steve Mether
Glen and June Mitchell
Kathleen Morgan
Raising Cane's
Teresa and David Ratekin
Steve Regan
Dean Reiners
Renegade Bootcamp
Rick Guill Insurance
Niki Roberts
Bret Rodenburg
Heather Russell-Schroeder
Matt Saar
Cindy Sand
Robert Schlautman
Robert and Nancy Schulze
Nancy Schulze
Kathryn Schuster

Michael Sciortino
Andrew Smith
Smith Davis Insurance
Smith Peterson Law Firm
Snyder and Associates, Inc.
Bridgette Trager
Cara Trede
US Bank
US Cellular
Robert Versaw
Marsha and Larry Weberg
Patricia and Johnnie Wheeler
Sharon and Chris White
Julie and Jeff Wymore
Kari Zimmerman
WoodmenLife

\$1 - \$99

Bethane Adams
American PSC, Inc.
Eric Anderson
Marcia Antworth
Mandi Backhaus
Joyce and Ethan Bartels
Alan and Karen Behrens
Michelle Biller
Rhonda Blair
Seth Bokelman
Beverly Bowers
James Brown
Lisa Brown-Wilke
Cindy Brunson
Stacey Buick
Chad and Tammy Burdick
Janet Burkybile
Dale and Julia Burris
Thomas Caffery
Janet and James Cattoni
Mary Cerra
Ed and Emma Chance
Denise Chevalier
Dallas and Wilma Clemesen
Kevin Clouser
Kandis Cole-Skank
Susie Conlon
Sarah Cook
Teresa Dowell
Andjela Drincic
Alice Edwards
Thomas Emmett
Diane Emsick
Keith Engel
Toni and Rick Fetter
Terrell Fichter
Margery and David Fienhold
Melvin Finley
Jennifer and Matt Fletcher
Lora Flom
Troy and Jason Fienhold-Haasis
Sara Forster
Amy Forsythe
Brandi Foulkes
Katie and Zane Fourney
Kyle Fritze
Fundamental Brewing Company
Erina Garcia
Jessica Garcia
Michael Geier
Jeri Gibilisco
Edith Goodwin
Theodore Gray
Jerome Green

Sue Griswold
Rikki Gurney
Lois Haines
Amy Hallam
Judith Hancock
Billy Harmon
Mary Jean Hawk
Donna Heffernan
Jeanette Heffernan
Trenton and Michaela Hill
Janice and Donald Hopper
Carol Horner
Shareen Howlett
Elizabeth Hunter
Amy Iles
Kris Jarecki
Jennifer and Travis Jarzynka
Mark Jefferson
Joyce Jensen
Jamie Jensen
Kate Jobe
Roxanne Johnson-Smith
Dawn Jones
Mary and Stephen Jones
Wesley Jones
Thomas and Sharon Judkins
Kathleen Jurgens
Melissa Katzer
Danna Kehm
Dennis and Cynthia Keithley
Deb and Dan Kelley
Kimberly Kolakowski
Darwin and Maureen Kruse
Rebecca Kuehn
Vicki Kyle
Cynthia Lainson
Lisa LaMarr
Mary Lancial
Debbra Landolt
Pamela Larson
Rita Lausen
Marlys Lien
Life Dimensions by Ilona
Barbara and Terry Lindsley
Sydney Liston
Karna Loewenstein
Kate Malott
Gary Matters
Carol Mattox
Kent McDougall
Matthew McGrath
Diane McKee
Bailey McQueen
Micheal Messerly
Jeri Miller
Doug and Kathy Moore
Rachel and Brandon Morehead
Anne Morgan
Amy Mosher
Kelly Mueller
Elizebeth Murphy
Sally Myers
Debbi and Neal Nation
Opal Neighbors
Lori and Mark Neill
Carri Nelson
Brandi and Doug Nice
Joe and Jacque Nicholas
Grace Oconnell
Lori and Mark O'Neill
Debbie Orduna
Blanca Perez
Cory Peters

Melissa Peterson
Maureen Petry
Sara and Bradley Point
Victoria Pospisal
Linda Primmer
Carole Quaas
Nicole Rauth
Macyl and Richard Reeves
Patricia Richardson
Barbara Richardson
Joseph Riebe
Kathy Rieger
Carolyn and Denny Robinson
Sharon Rock
Eric and Deanna Rodenburg
Jean Roeder
Lauren Rollins
Kevin Rooney
Pamela Rosman
Gloria Ruesch
Sven and Freya Ruesch
Kenneth Saar
Jolene Schaa
Teresa Schlautman
Katelyn Schindler

Anne Schoening
Luana Schoening
Bob and Chris Schomburg
Michelle Schulte
Randall Schumann
Lisa and Donald Schwartz
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Peggy Sellers
Thomas Shea
Billie Shelton
Alyssa Shriver
Larry Sievertsen
Sign Dreamers of the Heartland
Anthony and Caroline Simons
Michael Skipton
Roger and Stephanie Slyter
Eileen and James Smith
Jenny Smith
Karla Smith
Roxanne and Wright Smith
Stacey Smith
James Smyth
Sharon and Vernon Snipes
Nick Stankus

Larry Stervertsen
Gilbert and Virgene Stogdill
Yavor Stoynov
Kelsey Stupfell
Perry Stupfell
Evan Summy
Jackie Thompson
Cieandra Tripp
Jessica Turner
Jennifer Underwood
Joan Von Tersch-Wege
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Kyle Wall
Alyssa Wallace
Brandy Waller
Susan Walsh
Janice Ward
Valerie Ware
Bridgette Watson
Marsha and Larry Weberg
Lisa and Mark Wilke
Scott Williams
Jean Winchester
Cheryl Winchester
Wendy Wolfe
Carol Wood
Sharon Worthington

Message from the Board Chair

At the beginning of 2021, I wasn't sure what the year would look like for our community, our partners, and The 712 Initiative. As the year came to a close, I am thrilled to say we met or exceeded many benchmarks.

The community is really starting to engage in our mission. We are seeing increased numbers in our programs such as the Shamrock Shuffle, Farmers Market Council Bluffs and Winterfest, just to name a few. In addition to those programs, our volunteer base is higher than it has ever been, topping 500 invested community members!

From the bottom of my heart, thank you. Thank you for joining in our efforts to make this community better. Thank you for helping us demo and rehab houses so a family desiring to be homeowners has the chance to do so. Thank you for organizing trash collection in your neighborhood so we can continue to have pride in where we live.

As of June, our board has been back to meeting in person which has been a wonderful change. It allowed us as Directors to connect personally and really deep dive into conversations about how we, as an organization, can positively impact our community.

As we look ahead to this coming year, I have no doubt the probability of 'calling an audible' will continue. Each day there's something new and unpredictable, but as a nonprofit, whose vision is to create a community where families and businesses choose to live, work and play, I'm staying both optimistic and full of gratitude. Without you, our funders, our volunteers and each passionate staff member at The 712 Initiative, the organization wouldn't be where it is today. I am eagerly awaiting to see what can be accomplished again in 2022.



Jennifer Fletcher
2022 Board Chair

2021 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Board Chair
CHI Health Mercy Hospital

JENNIFER FLETCHER

Board Vice Chair
Jennie Edmundson Hospital

AMY CAROLUS

Board Treasurer
Heartland Family Service

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Board Secretary
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HDR

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Retired

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Ex-officio
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Council Bluffs, IA 51503

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