

THE **7th**
E 2
INITIATIVE

MID-YEAR
INSIDERS UPDATE
2022



Mid-Year Highlights



50 YEAR

Celebrate CB celebration



Recognized by the Council Bluffs Area Chamber of Commerce as a 2022 UNbelievable Workplace. The UNbelievable Workplace program is designed to help track employee satisfaction with the goal of creating a culture that teams want to work in.



\$65,000

invested through volunteers



FOUR

new properties acquired for full renovation and began our first single family new construction home



2,000

pounds of trash collected During our city wide Clean Sweep litter pick up



4,818

pairs of shoes collected to be reused, recycled or repurposed and diverted from our local landfill



Established our very first Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system thanks to a grant from Google. This will allow us to track, grow and analyze our data including donations, contact information, event and programming documentation and other institutional information.

MISSION

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

WEBSITE

the712initiative.org

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Director of Programming
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Cieandra Tripp
Project Coordinator



Development



Lynn Dittmar
Director of
Redevelopment

530 W Broadway

We started this project with acquisition in August of 2018. Since then, we have completed asbestos and lead-based paint inspection, Phase I environmental site assessment, schematic design, fundraising, designated as a local landmark, bidding, and construction. Most of these had their own set of challenges. When fundraising, how do you share the vision of what this building will bring to the community? Revitalizing a dilapidated mostly underutilized building at the entrance of our downtown is valued differently by different people. As is providing quality housing to bring business and activity to the heart of our community. And restoring a 1800's building to its original glory? Priceless. We are on track to unveil the completed project this October.

Construction has brought the most challenges. Sure, surprises were expected. But to discover that the building was originally built in 1857 when it was originally dated to 1890's? During demolition – removal of all the unoriginal materials – original store fronts where discovered. This includes original brick and lintels with rosettes. Of course, we want to save these pieces as any original materials can only elevate the finished product.

But to utilize these pieces, we must receive approval from both the state historical preservation office (SHPO) and local historic preservation commission (HPC). Both have approved our original plan to replace/fill CMU that we thought was there. Making the decision to keep these pieces pushes back ordering product – let me explain. Before we found the original store fronts, we were ready to order the glass for the storefronts. But then:

- Discovery of original brick and lintels
- Architect updates construction documents (10 days) +
- Submit to SHPO for review and approval (60-90 days) +
- Submit to HPC for review and approval (30 days)
- Complete work to restore brick and lintels/storefront openings
- Measure restored storefront opening and order glass

SHPO approval of work completed is necessary for the Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program, 1 of the 11 sources of funding for 530 W Broadway. In August we were awarded State Historic Preservation Tax Credits. This will provide up to \$1,188,880 to the project, 19% of total costs.

Other Updates of Note on 530 WB

Dusted Charm (the online portion of the business, not the 100 Block storefront), one of the new tenants at 530 W Broadway, was in measuring their new space for shelving and layout. 712 is excited to be able to support a local business – DC was able to secure space to grow at a very reasonable rate. <https://dustedcharm.com>



Housing Revitalization



Turner Morgan
Construction
Project Manager

P-R Overlay Update

In February we asked for you to support a new Planned Residential Overlay. We are happy to say that it has been approved and is now a tool we can use to provide more housing units within Council Bluffs. The 712 has submitted a Development Plan to the City to build 3 townhomes on a vacant lot located at 1st Ave and S 24th Street. Once approved, construction documents will be created and the project will be bid.

This parcel of land is along the FIRST AVE Project corridor and is a unique opportunity to reinvent an entire right-of-way (<https://www.councilbluffs-ia.gov/2347/FIRST-AVE>) through the heart of the City. Completion of this project brings economic development, placemaking, activation, and more to this corridor. By the end of 2022, the multiuse trail will be complete. Our units will face the trail – have their front yard opening to this community amenity. While townhomes may not be unique to Council Bluffs, their orientation and focus on the trail is.



706 S 3rd Street (new build)

This home was vacant for 8+ years. While we loved the architecture of the home, time made it challenging to rehab. It was demolished in May 2022. Now, new life is coming to the site. The foundation is in with framing to follow. When completed, this 4-bed 2-bath will perfectly fit into the Historic Gibraltar Neighborhood. We are utilizing the slopped lot to provide for a 2-stall garage in the basement – accessed from the alley.



The owners of this property passed away and the property remained in the deceased name. With no one able to take ownership, the property fell into disrepair and piled up weed notices on the front door. Taxes were not paid, it went to tax sale, but was never purchased. It became a neighborhood nuisance. After digging around, The 712 was able to work with the County to gain title to the property with the requirement that the property be improved sufficient to permit their occupancy for owner-occupied residential purposes. We are well on our way to improving this block.

2117 5th Ave, 455 Glen Ave, 1009 High St, and 125 S 8th (rehabilitations)

The rest of our homes for the 2022 will be comprehensive rehabs, each with their own story and challenges.

2117 5TH AVE was another property abandoned and acquired with the county's help. This west end 4 bed 2 bath has pretty much been rebuilt from top to bottom; from foundation walls to the hardware in the newly renovated kitchen and bathrooms. Over 100 volunteers dedicated their time helping us with the interior and exterior demolition *AS WELL AS A GENEROUS DONATION FROM Pinnacle Construction for the roof and siding.*

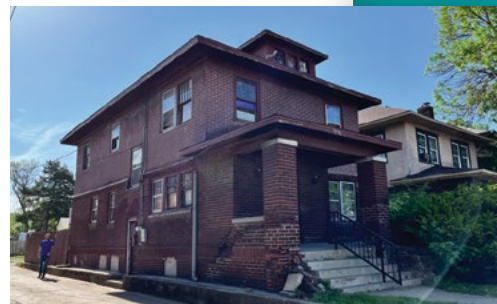
455 GLEN AVENUE will be an adorable 3 bed 2 bath at the end of brick street in one of Council Bluff's oldest neighborhoods. This home has been sitting vacant for nearly 8 years (I know because I live around the corner!). The elements and local wildlife had been making their home here for quite some time. Brave and generous volunteers helped clean this property out. This one is We are proud to save this historic structure and provide a home for a future homeowner.



1009 HIGH ST. was built in 1888 and has 5 bedrooms 2 full baths. We look forward to refurbishing some beautiful woodwork features on the inside and outside. With a backyard that lines the forests of Fairmount Park, and a wrap-around porch with a view of the metro skyline – this home will be great for a family looking to be close to nature, our historic downtown, and catch a sunset at the end of the day.



125 S 8TH - We are very excited to finally start working in the Bayliss Neighborhood. This sturdy 4-bed 2-bath brick beauty has seen better days, having been split into a long-neglected duplex. While this property was intended to be vacant, squatters have been utilizing this property. We'll be transforming this home back to single family occupancy making sure all major systems and rooms are updated while still holding onto its historic charm.



Demo Volunteers

There is no way to butter this up – demo work is HARD WORK! This year our program is taking on four very challenging remodel projects in central and west council bluffs and we couldn't be more grateful for all the donated time and sweat from our volunteers. These homes come in all shapes, sizes, (and smells) – and never short on surprises. We bust out old kitchen and baths, haul out dumpster after dumpster of junk, and dig into crumbling walls. I am also humbled at the effort and situations our volunteers are willing to walk into in order to support our neighborhoods.

Huge shout out to Servefest, First National Bank, Anytime Tees, MidAmerican Energy and our faithful "regulars," for rolling up their sleeves and helping us bring these homes back to life.

AMP for Neighborhoods



BEFORE



AFTER

drive by a property – but I can tell you when you get up close, and you take a minute to listen a story or three, there is pride and no shortage of love.

I've particularly enjoyed working with the Lynch family on Bluff Street. Roland, a lifelong Bluff Street resident, was nominated by his neighborhood. If you ever need a history lesson, he'll be the first to give it to you. This is a 4th generation home and Roland needed some siding repair and a new paint job to bring this historic beauty back to life. His daughter and son in law live in Florida and have been doing their best to keep Roland comfortable inside the house – stopping in every few months to help chip away at things needing done. Its been great getting to know them as well and team up on this endeavor.

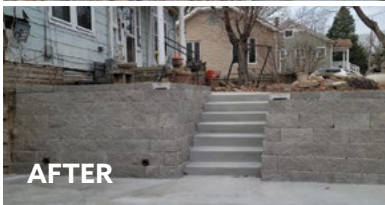
OVER 140 APPLICATIONS

3x more than last year

This year the number of applications MORE THAN TRIPLED (over 140). We look forward to getting to know some great neighbors (and getting some work done while we're at it).



BEFORE



AFTER



Cieandra Tripp
Project Coordinator

This year the AMP program will continue thanks to the support from TS Bank and an anonymous donor. Applications for the program were sent out in early spring. By the end of June 2022, we received just over 140 applications nominating 131 friends, families, or themselves. Many houses received multiple nominations which brought such a sense of fellowship within our community. The need here is prevalent and it is programs like AMP that will continue to improve our neighborhoods. Having the opportunity to visit each home, read sorrowful stories and see real people right here in Council Bluffs struggling to stay in their homes is really heart wrenching. I wish every single application could have been accepted. This year we are planning for the repairs to reflect major changes for these homeowners and make an impact on the neighborhoods that we serve.

"THIS IS A BEAUTIFUL PROGRAM FOR PEOPLE WHO NEED ASSISTANCE. I AM SO GRATEFUL."

Sal Savala, 2022 AMP Recipient

Programming & Events



Amber Quigley
Director of
Programming & Events

CreekTop Gardens

Our community garden has grown a great deal throughout the year with the help of committed volunteers, fantastic community partners, and the continued partnership and support of Iowa Total Care. We currently host 33 gardeners and 81 of the 90 available plots have been filled! This kind of growth and diversity is not only good for a healthy diet, but also leads to greater biodiversity in the gardens and increased sustainability for the CreekTop Gardens.

With the help and special programming of West Pottawattamie County Extension and Outreach, CreekTop Gardens welcomed students from Council Bluffs Community School District several times this summer to learn about gardening, healthy food options, and all the different things that you can grow in our Southwest Iowa climate. They also helped weed and plant several of the CreekTop plots and even enjoyed some fresh fruit from the orchard. Iowa Total Care also joined us to provide water and healthy snacks for all attendees.



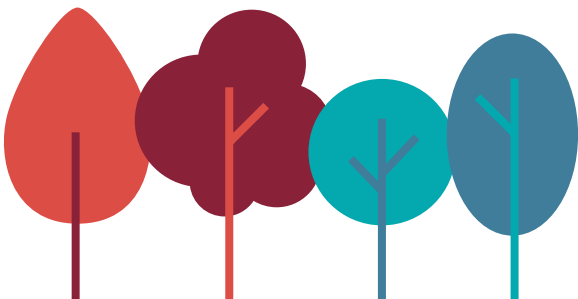
Farmer's Market

The 2022 Farmers Market season kicked off in May and will continue through September 29th. As we continue to grow, we are thrilled to share that we are now supporting 109 local farm, food business, and retail vendors. Of those 109, we have 59 signed on as season long vendors.

Every Thursday from 4:30pm to 7:30pm in Bayliss Park, in addition to the vendors, the community can also enjoy free music, free kids activities and free yoga.

The market also brings us great opportunities to partner with other local organizations to provide even more fun, resources, and education to the community. At the beginning of the summer, our market welcomed a kids market for younger vendors to showcase their items.

None of this would be possible without the solid foundation and funding provided by our sponsors, the programming support of the Council Bluffs Public Library and Ilona Holland and the countless volunteers from our local schools, troops, and churches.





Celebrate CB

For the last two years, COVID-19 has made an impact on many events in the area. One of those events was the Celebrate CB. So this year, after being on a two year hiatus and to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Celebrate CB parade, we were ready to bring Council Bluffs' longest standing community back bigger and better than ever.

The week kicked off on May 9th with a proclamation from Mayor Walsh at Bloomer Elementary and a week-long scavenger hunt was launched on the Iowa West Art mobile app. Then, on Tuesday, volunteers and businesses took to our streets to beautify the city for Clean Sweep.

Thursday, May 12th brought even more fun, including the Farmer's Market on 1st Ave, Kid's Business Fair, and the opening of one of the week's biggest attractions, the Carnival in Bayliss Park. On Friday, citizens enjoyed a cookout provided by the Chamber of Commerce Agriculture Committee.

On Saturday, May 15th, people lined up and down the streets of downtown Council Bluffs to watch the parade consisting of more than 100 entries and 74 floats centered around this year's theme, "Going for Gold." Josh Turek, notable athlete from Council Bluffs served as Grand Marshal for the parade.

Shoe Drive

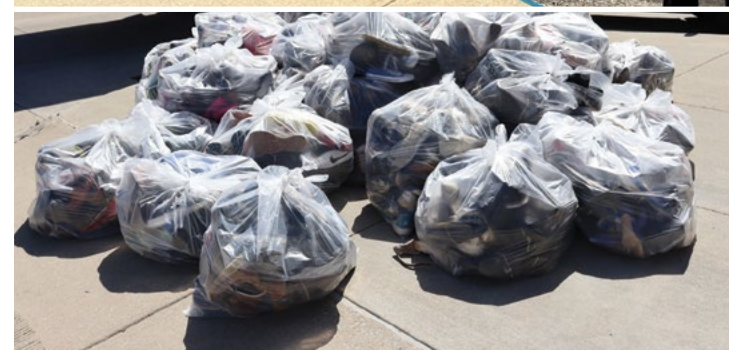
The 712 Initiative's Shoe Recycling Drive is a local shoe collection effort in partnership with elementary schools and local businesses. The drive is hosted each year to help divert thousands of shoes from our local landfill, as it takes shoes about 1,000 years to decompose. Shoe and clothing waste makes up 65.7% of content in landfills.

The 712 Initiative partners with Funds2Orgs in order to help provide a solution for this waste issue. Every shoe donated is reused in some way (reused, recycled, repurposed). In addition, our organization receives a financial donation for all the shoes we collect.

4,818 PAIRS

collected at 17 drop off locations

Together with our community partners who provided 17 drop off locations throughout the city, we collected 4,818 pairs of shoes over the course of just one month! In addition, The 712 Initiative received a financial donation for all of the shoes that were collected totaling \$2,335.



Clean Sweep

On Tuesday, May 10th, as part of our week-long Celebrate CB activities, over 300 volunteers from over 30 different businesses and organizations gathered to clean assigned sections throughout the city for a Council Bluffs-wide spring cleaning! Together they were able to collect and dispose of more than 2,000 pounds of waste from the streets and public areas around the city.

2,000 POUNDS

of trash cleaned up

Since we began tracking in 2012, this event has resulted in nearly 21,000 pounds of trash cleaned up. Imagine how much it has been since this event was created in 1971! A great help for beautifying the community each year.

As a thank you to our volunteers the first 150 participants received a \$15 food/drink voucher to use at participating 100 block restaurants.

To compliment Clean Sweep, we also added Dumpster Days to our programming calendar this year. Several free dumpsters were secured and made available to neighborhoods looking to do some spring cleaning.



OVER 300

volunteers from over 30 businesses and organizations



Upcoming Events

ROCK THE BLOCK – SEPTEMBER 17TH



The 712 Initiative and Habitat for Humanity of Council Bluffs have teamed up to bring Rock the Block to our community. Rock the Block is a neighborhood revitalization program that focuses on helping residents with repair and beautification projects to build pride and connect neighborhoods. Rock the Block will take place in the neighborhood surrounding Edison Elementary and we are looking for volunteers to assist with these projects. Examples of volunteer tasks include home repair (minor gutter repairs, porch repairs), weatherization (weather stripping, caulking) and home preservation (painting, landscaping).

Volunteer shifts are from 9am-12pm and 1pm-4pm. Lunch and a volunteer shirt will be provided. Visit our website for additional information and to register.

MOVIE NIGHT IN COUNCIL BLUFFS – SEPTEMBER 23RD

Join us at Roberts Park for Movie Night in Council Bluffs. We will be watching “Jungle Cruise” and have several activities planned for before the movie. There will be a scavenger hunt, Flora and Fauna botany education provided by Omaha’s Henry Doorly Zoo, prizes and more! Bring your favorite stuffed animal to enjoy the show and receive a jungle tattoo. Wildlife Encounters will also be onsite with some critters for you to meet. Activities start at 6p.m. and the movie will begin at 7:30p.m. This is a free event and popcorn will be provided!

BIKETOBER/BLOCKTOBER – OCTOBER 8TH

Save the Date for our 5th annual BIKETober/BLOCKtober event! Join us for a day of cycling and celebrating. There will be two routes available – a standard 12 mile ride as well as a 20 mile ride for up for those looking for an extra challenge. Registration is now open and you can sign up here www.GetMeRegistered.com/BIKEToberBluffs



Roll on through the finish line located at the BLOCKtober after party featuring live music, German food, Oktoberfest beer tasting tents, stein hoist contest, games, and tailgating garden. Entry to BLOCKtober is free!

WINTERFEST – NOVEMBER 18TH

Winterfest Winterfest is a holiday favorite in Council Bluffs! Activities include Bayliss Park holiday lighting ceremony, Santa’s workshop, food trucks, makers village, outdoor holiday movie, live reindeer, face painting, balloon art, crafts, carolers, cocoa, and much more. Thanks to Centris Federal Credit Union for sponsoring the 712 Makers Village, ensuring that it is free to the public.

FOR THE LOVE OF 712 – FEBRUARY 16TH

Show your love for The 712 Initiative by attending our first annual “For the Love of 712” at The Grass Wagon. It will be a fun night filled with live music, live and silent auction, and entertainment. The goal of this event is to raise \$25,000 for operational support so we can continue our efforts.



Katie Kyker
Director of Donor Relations
& Communications

Thank You



Sheryl Garst
CEO

You are receiving this mid-year update because you see our community’s potential and share in our vision to be the best we can be as a community, district, and neighbor. From our housing stock to vacant downtown buildings to energizing our streets with public events to celebrating together to cleaning up our community, we together make an impact big and small in our community. On behalf of our Board of Directors and staff we want to THANK YOU for your generous contributions to our organizations whether through time, talent or treasure. We simply could not do this without your support and shared vision for a brighter tomorrow.

As you’ll see in this mid-year update, there are some new faces on the 712 team. We welcomed Katie Kyker as our new Director of Donor Relations and Communications and Amber Quigley, Director of Programming & Events. Turner Morgan also was promoted full time to our Construction Project Manager and joined Cieandra Tripp in overseeing our wonderful Housing Revitalization and AMP for Neighborhoods Programs. They round out our small but mighty team and lead with energy and intention to serve our mission for the Council Bluffs community.

We also are nearing the final stages for our Phase I development on the 500 Block of W. Broadway. You have followed us for the past 5 years on this journey. And as I always say, these types of developments take 3-5 years from start to finish; three if you have the site already, five if you are starting from ground zero like we were in 2018. We are excited to deliver this project to the community this fall. Please be on the lookout for our grand open house announcement. A sincere thank you for the Iowa West Foundation, City of Council Bluffs, State of Iowa, Peter Kiewit Foundation, Pottawattamie County Trust Fund and Patty and Steve Nogg for the unwavering support and shared vision for this site.

Thank you also to the over 400 volunteers that have bettered the community through our projects and events this first half of the year. From parade committee members who gave countless hours to help the community Celebrate CB for the 50th Anniversary to the hundreds who helped us clean out troubled properties so more could be invested with the house. We thank you.

Again, thank you for your generous heart and spirit to serve the Council Bluffs community through our mission. We truly could not do this work without your support. We hope to see you at our upcoming events.

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