

november 2024

# ecia spotlight



## Hometown Pride REAP Awards





# Preston and Sabula Each Receive \$100K

The cities of Preston and Sabula worked with local developers and ECIA to secure \$100,000 each for their building rehab projects. The awards come from the popular Iowa Economic Development Authority's Community Catalyst Building Rehabilitation grant program.

The property at 172 W Gillet St in Preston will involve renovating an upper story space that has been vacant for 29 years and transform it into two spacious, two-bedroom residential units. The outside staircase, will be updated and reconstructed, to enter a common hall space and enter each unit.

The outside storefronts will be updated to match what is currently present on the lower, east side of the building where the US Post Office is housed. New doors and industrial windows will be installed as well as new, functional windows in the upper story units.



Above, current site; left and below, renderings for Sabula project.



The three-story property at 405 Pearl St in Sabula is one of the tallest downtown buildings with a great view of the river. Just up the street from the successful 2020 Catalyst project, this too has the potential for a

main level business and upper story housing. This building is in a perfect location for a dramatic overhaul.

Project goals after remediation is for a new and modern rehabbed structure with both a high ceiling and open floor plan three-story building. The three stories will include a lower-level commercial space which will include store front glass, an accompanying green space/ common space and two upper floor residential units.

For more information on the Community Catalyst grant, contact Marla Quinn, ECIA Grants and Municipal Coordinator at [mquinn@ecia.org](mailto:mquinn@ecia.org).

## Funding Available for Cedar Co. Properties

ECIA's Home Repair Programs has Lead Paint and Healthy Homes funding available to assist 10+ Cedar County properties. Homes or rental properties built before 1978 are eligible. We encourage homeowners or tenants to apply, especially those with children 5 or younger who live or visit the home. If lead is found in the home, the home will be made lead safe. There is additional money available to make home improvements to make it safer and healthier for children. Some homes/rental properties receive new windows, siding, and other improvements. Fill out our interest form, email [homerepairs@ecia.org](mailto:homerepairs@ecia.org) or call 563-690-5791 to learn more.



# ECIA Anniversaries & New Hires in August/September



Jenny Schrobilgen  
32 years



Chandra Ravada  
22 years



Denise Hefel  
19 years



Sarah Berning  
14 years



Amanda Dupont  
9 years



Dawn Danielson  
5 years



Walter Nims  
5 years



Caitlin Siemionko  
5 years



Laura Carstens  
4 years



Roseann Sabers  
4 years



Amber Kelley  
2 years



Steve Stoffel  
2 years



Sue Shaull  
1 year

Congratulations to the above staff who recently celebrated work anniversaries. Your dedication and hard work in and for the ECIA region are truly appreciated.

## November is Homeless Awareness Month

November is Homeless Awareness Month and Community Solutions of Eastern Iowa (CSEI) is asking for help to address the urgent needs of our area's most vulnerable population. You can support those in our community who are living outside, as well as those who are transitioning from the street into a home of their own, by contributing to CSEI's Care & Share program. CSEI is looking for sleeping bags, tents, tarps, new cleaning supplies, and hygiene products. If you'd like to contribute, drop donations at the locations listed below by November 30. You can also make donations or shop at CSEI's Amazon site from their website: [www.cseiowa.org](http://www.cseiowa.org).

**Asbury City Hall**  
5290 Grand Meadow Dr.  
Asbury, IA

**Off the Hoof Meats & Deli**  
314 Franklin St.  
Delhi, IA

**Premier Bank**  
9th & Iowa Sts.  
Dubuque, IA

**Premier Bank**  
2625 NW Arterial  
Dubuque, IA



# Hometown Pride REAP A



Two of ECIA's Keep Iowa Beautiful (KIB) Hometown Pride (HP) communities secured funding, with ECIA's assistance, from the Iowa DNR's Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) City Parks and Open Spaces Grant.

Luxemburg received \$50,000 towards the construction of a .55-mile-long recreation trail surrounding the Luxemburg Ball Park to be used by pedestrians, bicyclists, and residents using the park. The trail will connect the park to streets in town, allowing for improved accessibility and connection for the community.

Peosta was awarded \$75,000 to help build an indoor/outdoor pavilion as part of the Kelly Oaks Park development project (groundbreaking photo above). Kelly Oaks will be an ADA accessible park with nature-scape playgrounds, disc golf, open green space, pavilion, and a multi-use trail that will loop around the park, weaving through the trees and serve as the trailhead for connecting with other new trails the city has planned. The new pavilion will be the heart of the park with direct access to the future trail system.



# Awards



## Luxemburg Gets Green

The City of Luxemburg has plans to construct a .55-mile-long trail with adorning trees to give residents an escape to nature. Interest and funding for the project was spurred by the Luxemburg KIB HP committee who engaged the local youth for a tree planting event on October 10th. The community came together and planted 20 trees. The event was funded by a \$2,500 grant the committee was awarded by Trees for Kids.





# EIRHA Secures Funds

**Addressing Health Hazards:** The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced an award of \$277,100 to the Eastern Iowa Regional Housing Authority (EIRHA) to evaluate and reduce residential health hazards in public housing, including carbon monoxide, mold, radon, and fire safety.

The funding will also help EIRHA comply with the National Standards for the Physical Inspection of Real Estate (NSPIRE). NSPIRE improves HUD's oversight by aligning and consolidating inspection regulations used to evaluate HUD housing across multiple programs. NSPIRE strengthens HUD's physical condition standards, in addition, fire safety, carbon monoxide, mold and moisture are all standards that are inspected through NSPIRE.

**Expanding Access to Housing Counseling:** HUD announced an award of \$14,773 to provide housing counseling services, train housing counseling professionals, and deliver educational resources to consumers about pre-purchase homebuying, financial literacy, foreclosure and rental eviction prevention, reverse mortgage counseling, disaster recovery, appraisal bias, and heirs' property management.

On July 30, 2010, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development approved EIRHA as a Housing Counseling Agency. EIRHA has met the department's initial approval criteria and submitted an acceptable housing counseling plan to serve its target area (Dubuque, Delaware, Jackson, Cedar, Clinton, Jones, and the city of Bettendorf (Scott) counties). The Department approved EIRHA to provide money management, pre-purchase counseling, and home improvement and rehabilitation counseling in accordance with its counseling plans. To date, 394 families were assisted with Housing Counseling assistance, of which 134 have closed on a home. 24 applicants are currently actively participating and working towards homeownership.

## ECIA Region Receives \$1M HUD Grant

ECIA staff recently secured a \$1,000,000 HUD Healthy Homes Weatherization Cooperation Demonstration (HHWCD) grant. The goal with the funding is to find a process that maximizes program efficiencies and provides benefits to the occupant, by taking a unique approach and pairing two existing programs: 1) ECIA's Healthy Homes/Lead and Healthy Homes, and 2) HACAP's Weatherization programs. While both programs bring a different focus area, they have overlapping activities. The HHWCD grant will allow ECIA staff to explore how these two like-minded programs can work together and develop a process to make a larger impact on an individual owner-occupied home. The three-year grant program aims to assist 45 homes in Dubuque, Delaware, and Jackson counties.

Mitch Finn, HACAP Chief Operating Officer shared, "The \$1 million HUD Healthy Homes Weatherization Cooperation Demonstration grant represents an exciting partnership between ECIA and HACAP, leveraging the strengths of Healthy Homes and Weatherization programs to maximize benefits for homeowners. This innovative approach aligns with our commitment to holistic, impactful services, and I look forward to seeing the positive outcomes for the 45 homes targeted in Dubuque, Delaware, and Jackson counties."

## ECIA Awarded USDA Grant

ECIA staff secured a \$150,000 USDA grant to establish a three-year Rural Resiliency Training Institute (RRTI) to continue to provide trainings to empower the region. The RRTI responds to needs identified by low-income rural local government and economic development leaders throughout the region. The goal is to address these needs by developing group trainings, one-on-one trainings, and providing technical assistance to increase the capacity of City staff and elected officials.

Trainings and technical assistance will address quality-of-life projects and economic development-related assistance; business retention and expansion; supporting a rural workforce; and technology and innovation. This technical assistance, as well as professional development conferences, will enable the recipients to gain skills to carry out projects to become the communities they envision.



# Maquoketa's Lighting for Modern Energy

The State of Iowa received \$2 million of federal formula funds to establish the Iowa Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) Program. Maquoketa was awarded \$90,455 to update interior lighting in city-owned buildings: City Hall, the Airport, Library, Fire Department, Public Works Garages, Police Department, Water, Wastewater, and YMCA/YWCA. ECIA staff secured the grant for the City.

Josh Boldt, City Manager, explained that the two main goals for the project are to reduce energy costs in all the city-owned facilities as all have outdated and high energy usage lights, and to be environmentally responsible. Replacing or retrofitting the lighting fixtures and lamps with energy efficient LED alternatives will result in lower energy usage. Improving inefficient operations and eliminating wasteful energy habits are the most practical and cost-effective strategies for controlling future energy costs.



Boldt stated, "Reducing the costs associated with lighting in these city buildings will allow the city to put those cost savings towards other projects for the public's benefit. Additionally, the reduced greenhouse gas emissions will benefit the health of our residents."

## MMEU Awarded Grid Resilience Grant

The Iowa Energy Office is administering the Iowa Grid Resilience Fund from the U.S. Department of Energy to make subawards to qualified applicants in the state of Iowa, through the Iowa Economic Development Authority. Maquoketa Municipal Electric Utility (MMEU) was awarded \$701,374 for their Industrial South Substation Resiliency Project. ECIA staff wrote and submitted the successful application.

MMEU is a locally owned and operated electric utility serving around 3,350 residential, commercial, and industrial customers in Maquoketa, Iowa. MMEU currently has two generator plants and three substations with only two of the three substations directly connected to each other and the two generator plants. 2000 feet of underground conductor will be installed, connecting the 3rd substation which supports major employers and basic resource providers in Maquoketa, to back up generation or a substation. The goal of the project is to increase ampacity and decrease the length of power outages, providing a more resilient solution in the event of a major, city-wide outage.

Chris Krogman, General Manager at MMEU stated, "Receiving the Iowa Grid Resilience grant is a big deal for Maquoketa. If a major outage were to occur on the south side of Maquoketa, this will give us much better options to help restore power to a large group of critical businesses. Some of these businesses provide essential supplies to the community and employ several residents. We are very grateful to be awarded this funding, it allows us to create efficiencies and is all around safer for the linemen."





# Construction Begins on Former Brownfield Site

BTS Inc. held a groundbreaking ceremony on November 18th at South 4th Street in Clinton. The former Brownfield site will be home to four new townhomes in 2025.

The City previously took possession of the row of buildings located at 1000-1012 S 4th St. The structures were abandoned, vacant and dilapidated. The City partnered with the DNR, EPA, and ECIA to have the sites assessed and cleaned up. Cleanup was completed in summer 2024 and the City recently sold three of the parcels to BTS Development LLC which plans to build four attached townhomes. The City provided BTS with a \$100,000 development grant. The developer will provide down payment assistance of \$7,500 to qualified homebuyers.



A total investment of \$2.3 million is anticipated for the completion of Phase I. This includes the cost to acquire the sites, assess, cleanup and make sites ready for reuse.

Townhomes will be available in summer of 2025 and will range in price between \$250,000 and \$275,000. All the homes will include a 2-car attached garage, 3 bedrooms and 2.5 bathrooms.

ECIA provided technical and funding assistance to the City through ECIA's Brownfield Program. To learn more about ECIA's Brownfield program check out: <https://ecia.org/brownfields/>.

## Hometown Pride Holiday Events

ECIA Hometown Pride communities are getting in the spirit of the holidays!

La Motte – **November 29 • 6-9 pm.** Hallmark in the Park and snacks with Santa. Lighting of the nativity scene and viewing of the festive lights in the park.

Tipton – **November 30.** Shop specials during Small Business Saturday and stay for the Parade of Lights.

Delaware – **December 7 • 11 am-1 pm.** Park tree lighting, bonfire, carols, and fun, December 1 • 5pm AND come back to see Santa at the Delaware Volunteer Fire Department.

Worthington – **December 6 • 5 pm.** Saint Nick's Night Christmas Tree Lighting at Veterans Square Park, sing Christmas carols, enjoy hot chocolate and wassail (a mixed drink consisting of hot cider, spices, and spirits).

Preston – **December 7 • 1-4 pm.** Holiday Hop the lighted Christmas parade, festival of trees, food, and Santa.

Asbury – **December 8 • 6pm.** Tree lighting at Asbury Park. Bring an ornament to hang, enjoy some hot chocolate, and visit Santa at the Atrium behind the Library.

Holy Cross – **December 13 • 6-8 pm.** 'Oh Holy Cross Night,' Holy Cross Fire Station. Santa and Mrs. Claus, soup supper with hot chocolate and smores, wagon rides to vote for your favorite light display.

Delhi – **December 14 • 4-7 pm.** Soup Supper and MV School Activities Department's "Festival of Trees" decorating contest at the Delhi Legion. Tree Lighting Ceremony at Wayne and Pat Sawyer's featuring the Maquoketa Valley Choir kicking off "It's A Charlie Brown Christmas" event, 5 pm. The Sternhagen's Holiday Lighting Extravaganza will feature Santa at his workshop.

Mechanicsville – **December 14 • 11 am.** Wreaths Across America ceremony, St Mary's Catholic Church, followed by the placing of 365 wreaths, one at every grave site.

Peosta – **December 19 • 6-7 pm.** Cookies with Santa and Mrs. Claus, Peosta Community Center and parade with Santa and Mrs. Claus transported by the Volunteer Fire Department.

East Central Intergovernmental Association

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