

july 2023

# ecia spotlight



## Jackson County's Newest Trail







# Innovate 120 Ribbon Cutting

---

The former US Bank building in downtown Maquoketa has been transformed into a place to cultivate business ideas. Welcome to Innovate 120!

Debi Durham, Director of the Iowa Economic Development Authority and Iowa Finance Authority, was the featured guest at a ribbon cutting last month, along with Innovate 120 founder and executive director Robert Abbott, and city officials. A community open house was also held later that same day.

A project like this required varied funding sources that included about \$490,000 in state Community Development Block Grants acquired through a partnership with the ECIA and the City, a grant from the Stead Family Foundation, and private gifts from the Abbott family.

Abbott created Innovate 120 to develop an entrepreneurial ecosystem that encourages and supports innovation and business growth. Through the many programs currently offered by Innovate 120, the intent is to find and support those who may be contemplating developing business ideas. Space will also be available to budding businesses on a daily or monthly basis. Professional meeting space is made available to those members and anyone needing a professional presence.

“This shows what Jackson County can be,” Abbott said. “The building is a reflection of the city’s successful past, while focusing on how it can help support a bright future.”



# ECIA Awarded EPA Grants Totaling \$2 Million

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has selected ECIA to lead a \$1 million Brownfields Assessment Coalition Grant that will be funded by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. Grant funds will be used to inventory brownfield sites and conduct 10 Phase I and 20 Phase II environmental site assessments. Grant funds also will be used to conduct planning and community outreach activities.

Assessment activities will focus on Cedar, Clinton, Delaware, Dubuque, Jackson, and Jones counties in Iowa, and the city of Edgewood, Iowa. Priority sites include a vacant and unmaintained college campus, an abandoned industrial and manufacturing building, a former coal-fired gas plant, and a vacant garage. Non-lead coalition members include Clinton County and Limestone Bluffs Resource, Conservation, and Development Inc.

“ECIA is grateful and honored to have been selected for a \$1 million Assessment Coalition Grant,” Dawn Danielson, ECIA’s Development Coordinator/Brownfields Project Manager, said. “With the funds, ECIA can continue its efforts within the region and is able to expand in offering brownfield assistance in Jones County.” Danielson wrote the successful applications.

EPA also selected ECIA to receive an additional \$1 million through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law for their successful Revolving Loan Fund (RLF). Pictured to the right are staff from ECIA, City of Clinton and the EPA.



## Clinton Awarded \$500,000 EPA Grant

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) selected the City of Clinton for a \$500,000 cleanup grant on the 1000 block of South 4th Street, a site contaminated with asbestos-containing materials that was formerly used for residential apartments and retail businesses, including a grocery store, laundromat, hardware store, and restaurant. (pictured right)

“The City of Clinton is honored that EPA Region 7 selected our city to receive a \$500,000 Brownfields grant,” Brooke said at the ceremony in front of the former YMCA building on South Third Street. “This grant will enable Clinton to engage in a vital environmental clean-up project.”

Both ECIA and Clinton received ceremonial big checks and staff spent the morning showing EPA officials the project sites.





# Jackson County's Newest



Jackson County's newest trail — the Maquoketa River Water Trail — was dedicated last month. The trail, which features the Maquoketa River and the North Fork of the Maquoketa River in Jackson County, is a 90-mile water trail that stretches from Canton County Park to the Mississippi. ECIA's Senior Planner, Dan Fox, developed the plan for the water trail.

Water trails are recreational routes on rivers and lakes that provide a unique experience for paddlers. The Iowa Department of Natural Resources partnered with Jackson County Conservation and ECIA to develop a water trails master plan for the Maquoketa River and North Fork of the Maquoketa River in Jackson County. The master plan provides a future vision for river recreation in Jackson County and identifies improvements to river access, parking, safety and more.

Iowa DNR Water Trails Coordinator John Wenck described the area as "one of Iowa's best, most scenic, water trails."

Iowa DNR Director Kayla Lyon said the trail adds 90 miles to make a total of 1,190 miles of state water trails. "The Iowa DNR provides the expertise, but the local ownership is what makes these projects successful," Lyon said.

The North Fork and Maquoketa River trail goes through high bluffs and wildlife areas of the Mississippi River Valley



# e Trail



on its way eastward to meet the Mississippi. The water trail is classified as a beginner trail. Along the way, paddlers can picnic, camp, rent canoes, fish, boat, and swim.

Following the ribbon cutting ceremony, about 30 participants from Iowa, Illinois, and Wisconsin took a guided paddling trip down the river from Canton to Royertown Access. Along the way, they stopped for a hike to visit a hill prairie at Buzzard Ridge Wildlife Area. They also discussed the geology, archaeology, and ecology of the area with Cherie Haury-Artz of the Office of the State Archaeologist and Joe Artz, geologist with the University of Iowa.



# Preston Times Receives Preservation Award

---

The Preston Times Newspaper Building was selected for the Rural Preservation Project Award and received it at a ceremony in June at the Orpheum Theatre in Sioux City. This award recognizes preservation/restoration of rural cultural landscape, heritage, or built environment.

Each year, Preservation Iowa seeks to honor individuals, organizations, projects, and programs whose work demonstrates a commitment to excellence in historic preservation with the Preservation at Its Best Awards Program. In doing so, the program hopes to inspire others to take action to preserve, protect, and promote historic resources.



Preston Times, circa 1970s



Preston Times, today!



A touch of modern on the inside



# Colesburg Receives 1st Ever Catalyst Grant

If your community has a vacant building and an interested developer (and if it's a two-story building; even better) then you may be poised to apply to the Community Catalyst Building Remediation Program grant. The City of Colesburg just received \$100,000 for the old stone building on the edge of town. The developer plans to split the upper-level apartment into two units, and open a business in the vacant storefront.

Pre applications are typically due in late-January and if invited to apply, full applications are due in mid-April. Match from the City is required. Please email or call Marla Quinn if you have a potential project at [mquinn@ecia.org](mailto:mquinn@ecia.org)/563-690-5703.



## Senator Grassley Stops at ECIA

When a Senator wants to stop by and visit, you drop everything you're doing to accommodate. Senator Chuck Grassley visited ECIA for one of his 99-county tour stops. He answered a variety of questions over his 1-hour visit with local residents, ECIA team members, and local elected officials.





# Sharon Nesteby to Retire

Sharon has been a staple at ECIA for over three decades and we are so happy (but a little sad for us) for her as she embarks on retirement. A steadfast and dedicated employee, some of you may know Sharon Nesteby, Executive Assistant, if you've ever served on ECIA's Executive Committee, Council, EIRHA, EIRUSS, E.C.I.A. Business Growth, ECDC, or Housing Trust Fund, and Prosperity Eastern Iowa. She coordinated these meetings and recorded minutes. She also did payroll, accounts payable, bank reconciliations, and other accounting functions. If you were lucky enough to work with her during her tenure, you know Sharon is not only hard working, dependable, dedicated, and detailed, she is funny, friendly, family-oriented, and will really be missed by everyone at ECIA. Congratulations on 33 years, Sharon!

