



112 First St E, Independence

319-334-3439

Director@travelbuchanan.com

March 27, 2026

City of Independence
331 1st Street East
Independence, Iowa 50644

Honorable Mayor Bleichner and City Council Members and City Manager Schmitz,

I am writing to share an update regarding the mural project in Independence, awarded to Buchanan County Tourism through the Iowa Arts Council's Iowans Create Community Mural Program. We are partnering with artist Jenna Brownlee on this project, which provides an opportunity to bring a meaningful and visually engaging piece of public art to our community while highlighting themes of connection and local pride.

We have been in communication with Matt Schmitz, Brian Lau, and Matt Chesmore to ensure all appropriate steps are being taken regarding permitting and approval. A preliminary design is being developed. We are also in the process of finalizing a contract with the building owner, Dom Spargrove to support the installation, preparation work, and longevity of the art. The contract with Spargrove is attached.

The project timeline is currently being coordinated with the artist, with anticipated painting dates expected to be July 6-13. Artist fees are fully covered through the grant; however, there is an estimated \$1,100 cost for tuckpointing that is necessary to prepare the wall surface. We are actively working to secure funding to cover this portion of the project.

We are excited about the positive impact this mural will have on our downtown and appreciate your continued support as we move forward. If you have any additional questions, feel free to email myself, director@travelbuchanan.com. Additionally, Lisa Kremer of Buchanan County Economic Development Commission will be in attendance on April 6, to answer any questions.

Sincerely,
Isabel Thurn
Tourism Director
Buchanan County Tourism