



Program Provides Emergency Funding

Dubuque Initiatives, a nonprofit that focuses on supporting challenging projects, addressing job creation, and revitalizing the community has started an emergency “bridge financing” program partnering with ECIA Business Growth to administer the loan fund. This program will be distributing up to \$10,000 per business for City of Dubuque companies that employ 50 or fewer workers. The emergency program is meant to provide funds to businesses in the waiting period before they receive funds from previously applied for loans and grants from state or federal programs.

This “bridge loan” will be available to companies that previously applied for funds through state or SBA programs. In many cases, businesses have been awarded funding through those programs but haven’t received it yet. In these instances, selected businesses would be given no-interest loans for 60 days and would retire them once they receive their state or federal funds.

ECIA, Greater Dubuque Development Corp., Northeast Iowa Community College and the local Small Business Development Center started the helpline to guide local businesses throughout the process of acquiring state or federal funds.

Businesses located within the City of Dubuque can apply for assistance by calling the COVID-19 helpline at 563-588-3350. Qualifying businesses will be referred to ECIA and ECIA staff will work with the business through the application process.

First Home Nears Completion

The Bear River Cottages pocket neighborhood in Maquoketa almost has its first home completed! Several lots are still available and further information on the project can be found at:

<https://www.ecia.org/pocketneighborhood>.



Brownfields Site Revitalized



One of the sites revitalized by the ECIA Brownfields Assessment Coalition has been showcased by the EPA in their monthly bulletin. The former Smitty’s Appliance/Auto Service property in Manchester Iowa sat precariously close to the Maquoketa River outside of Manchester. Due to repeated flooding from the river, the businesses finally closed their doors for good, leaving behind underground storage tanks and asbestos-ridden buildings.

The city of Manchester acquired the properties through voluntary purchase. Prior to the city’s acquisition, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) provided funding for a Phase I environmental site assessment (ESA). This non-intrusive process helps to determine if further testing of soils or groundwater for contaminants (Phase II ESA) is necessary.

The city completed a Phase II ESA using ECIA Brownfields Assessment Coalition funds awarded under CERCLA section 104(k). The tests determined that the underground storage tanks did not pose any risk of release or concern. However, an asbestos-containing materials inspection indicated the presence of asbestos materials.

IDNR assisted the city with asbestos abatement through CERCLA section 128(a) sub-award funding, which prepared the property for safe demolition.



After cleanup and removal was complete, the city developed the site into Riverfront Park, which now includes a public shelter, restroom and shower house, and public event and concert space. Riverfront Park became the “water trailhead” for the city’s Whitewater Park. Manchester had previously invested millions in adjusting the Maquoketa River’s water flow to create a whitewater sport-challenge route. The acquisition, cleanup and revitalization of the Riverfront Park helped to make the final connection to Whitewater Park for public access.

New Fire Truck for Maquoketa

The City of Maquoketa was awarded \$113,000 from a USDA-Community Facilities grant to cover 55% of the costs to purchase an Aerial (fire truck) and outfit it for service with the Maquoketa Fire Department.

The purchase of the new truck is a 15 year update from their previous truck which was over 34 years old and starting to age. The apparatus will serve the Maquoketa Fire District of approximately 144 square miles and with 30 trained volunteer fire members.



Homes for Iowa Builds Houses & Futures

Newton Correctional Facility has adopted a project that will be supplying Iowa communities with affordable housing and provide inmates with important job training to use once they are released.

Inmates will be building transportable homes at the minimum-security prison in Newton to give inmates the necessary skills to reintegrate into society and provide affordable housing for Iowa communities that don’t have a way to increase housing availability on their own.



This idea originally started in South Dakota under the “Governor’s House program,” a similar program that has provided more than 2,000 homes to the elderly, persons with disabilities, and income-qualified families in South Dakota. Homes were built at the Mike Durfee State Prison and then transported throughout the state.

After several meetings with the South Dakota councils of government and others, Newton was able to put together its own program. The Iowa Finance Authority has awarded Homes for Iowa \$1.2 million dollars to assist in the construction of the first 20 homes. The home in the photo is being transported to Jefferson, Iowa. Homes can be transported anywhere in the State and are priced at \$180,000 or less total package, for households with incomes less than \$100,000. For the project to be successful, the land should be donated or less than \$10,000.

Counties Awarded Emergency CDBG Grants

Jackson, Delaware and Dubuque counties have all been awarded Community Development Block Grants to support programs in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

These programs include food assistance to vulnerable populations, transportation and delivery services through the Region 8 Regional Transit Authority and hotspot internet access to students qualifying for free and reduced lunches so they can continue their studies at home.

Congratulations to our communities and their continued dedication to supporting people during these difficult times.



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