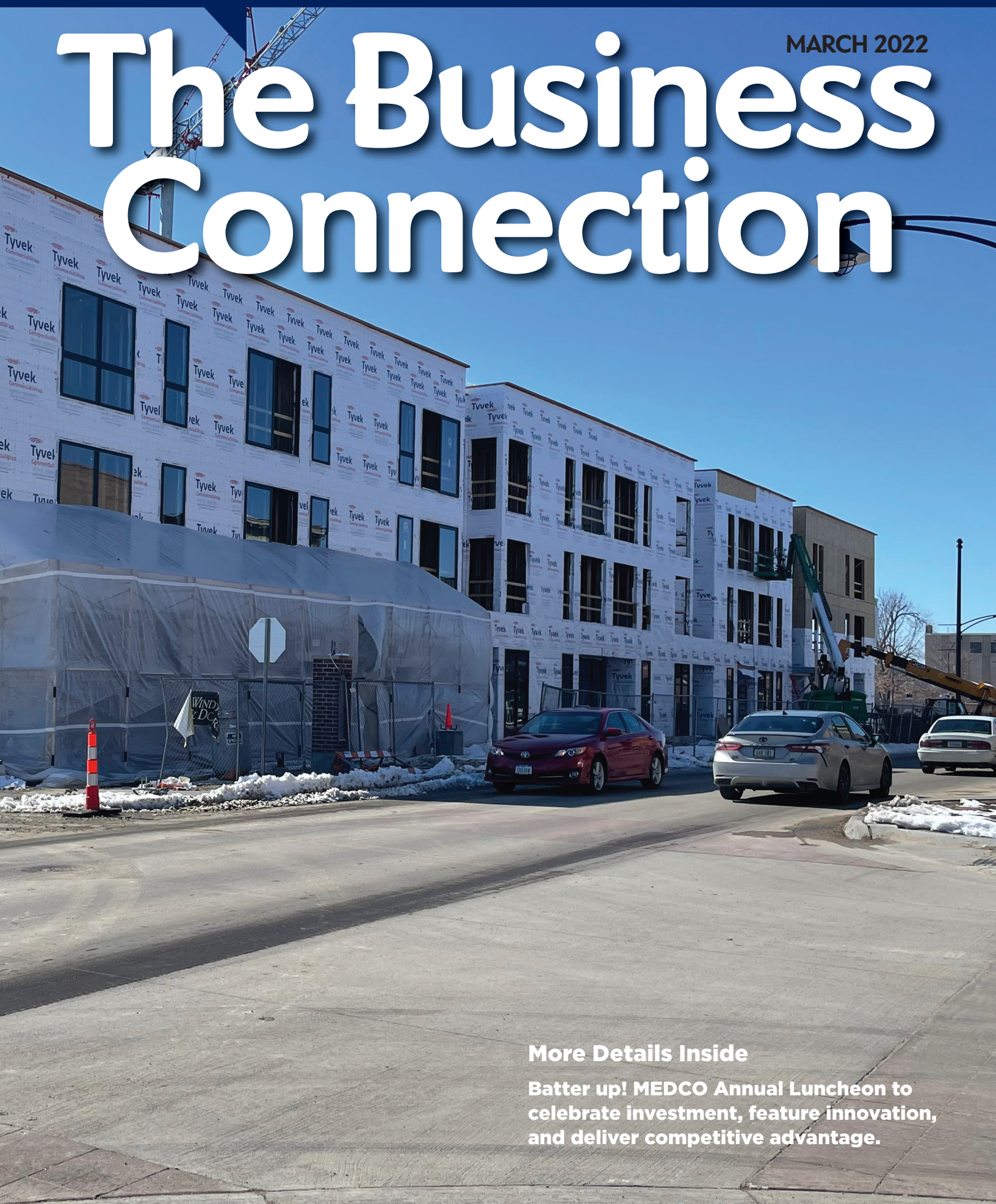


A NEWS JOURNAL OF THE  
Marion Chamber of Commerce, Uptown Marion, and Marion Economic Development Corp.

MARCH 2022

# The Business Connection



**More Details Inside**

**Batter up! MEDCO Annual Luncheon to celebrate investment, feature innovation, and deliver competitive advantage.**



## Transforming in '22

MEDCO President

319-743-4724

[nick@medcoiowa.org](mailto:nick@medcoiowa.org)

The Business Connection

# It takes a team.

2022 will be a transformational year for Marion Economic Development Corporation. We're excited to see you on May 4 as we celebrate at our 36th Annual Luncheon. We are "all in" with a fun baseball theme and will join with community partners to celebrate home runs from the past year and preview an all-star lineup in the year to come.

While construction costs and supply chains remain strained, we're busy working with many of you who are considering ways to adopt Industry 4.0 technologies in your business. In fact, we'll share some of those stories on May 4.

Attracting workforce requires our community to be well positioned with diverse and affordable housing options. We're excited to see a strong pipeline of projects set to begin construction this season.

Supporting the growth of existing companies and attracting new, means we must have a diverse mix of available real estate options available. That's why we're partnering with local developers to construct nearly 150k sf of flexible industrial space this year.

Finding skilled talent is the number one challenge your business is facing. If not, you will be soon. That's why we're developing innovative earn and learn partnerships with organizations like Mercy Hospital. We're equipping students with industry credentials while literally paying them to complete high school. We'd love to partner with your business to discuss a similar development program.

Keeping our business owners connected to the community and focused on long term local growth requires intentional dialogue amongst their peers. Business Founders is a new networking platform MEDCO will launch this Spring.

These same founders have powerful stories that will propel the next generation of entrepreneurs and business leaders looking for opportunities to create and grow local Marion companies. That's why we're launching "Startup

Spotlight" and "The Story Of" as platforms to connect seasoned business professionals and startups.

I realize each of these paragraphs provide just enough information for you to say "huh?" Leading economic development in the Marion community means our team works in many areas to support business development, real estate development, workforce development, and more. Please stay connected with us at [medcoiowa.org](http://medcoiowa.org) where you'll find many more details on new programs launching this year.

We have much more to share and hope that you'll join us on May 4 at Prospect Meadows for the 36th Annual MEDCO Luncheon. Thank you for your partnership!



**ONE THE COVER:** Construction continues at Broad & Main in Uptown Marion. The project is anticipated to be complete later this summer.

## BATTER UP!

### MEDCO'S 36<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL LUNCHEON

**Wednesday, May 4<sup>th</sup> | 11:30 - 1 PM**

Join us to celebrate last season's wins and equip your team to knock it out of the park! Join us as we meet investors building our future, companies adopting cutting-edge technology, and leaders delivering fresh competitive advantage.

We can't wait to welcome you to Prospect Meadows.

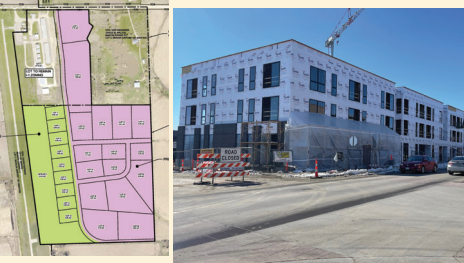
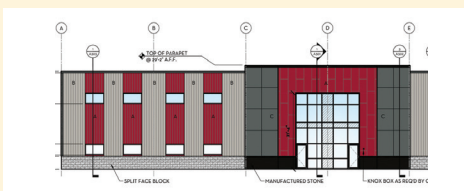
**Registration Open: [medcoiowa.org/annualluncheon](http://medcoiowa.org/annualluncheon)**

**PLUS, a Charitable Home Run Derby!**

Presenting Sponsor: Alliant Energy.

The transition from snow to spring means the 2022 construction season is upon us. New activity is anticipated to remain high in the Marion community across all property types including industrial, commercial, and multi-family residential.

Flexible industrial space is a hot commodity as companies continue to grow and bring supply chains closer to home. While Marion has been well positioned with shovel ready ground, available buildings have been in short supply. Three significant projects will begin construction in the Marion Enterprise Center this year:



**This 52,300 square foot industrial flex building** will be constructed at 999 Enterprise Drive in Marion. The property sits at the corner of Marion Airport Rd. and Enterprise Drive with direct connectivity to US Highway 151. The building can be subdivided to serve multiple tenants and provides a combination of dock and overhead doors along the rear of the property.

Next door, this **60,000 square foot industrial flex building** is suited for users in need of multiple dock doors and higher overhead clearance. Generous parking is provided. Bays can be subdivided into as little as 10k sf.

This **30,000 square foot building** located at 6407 Partners Avenue will serve as the corporate headquarters for Twenty 40 Building Concepts, Inc.

Switch Development is marketing two virtual spec buildings in the Marion Enterprise Center. Both a **150k sf and 200k sf building** are proposed on a 29-acre parcel. The property is being marketed by Cushman Wakefield.

The Marion Aircom Park will be under construction in 2022. Located east of the Marion Airport, this industrial park will feature **1-7 acre parcels**. The project is being developed by Genesis Equities.

**Multi-family construction will pick up speed in 2022. Each of these projects were awarded financial support through the state's Workforce Housing Tax Credit program with a local match provided by the City of Marion. The Workforce Housing program supports market rate housing with a focus on abandoned sites that are ready for redevelopment.**

**Broad & Main on 7th** features 39 residential rentals with first floor commercial in the heart of Uptown Marion.

**Greenpark Apartment Living** is a 147-unit development at the former YMCA location. The project will be constructed in multiple phases with an initial 78 units scheduled to begin this year.

**Boulevard Apartments** will be located on the former Hames Homes property at 648 Marion Boulevard. The site will feature a 4-story, 93-unit apartment building with a 6-unit townhome.

**Commercial construction continues along 7th Avenue, Tower Terrace Road, and at East Towne Crossing.**

East Towne Crossing will welcome a Scooter's Coffee, Smoothie King and additional tenants in 2022. Along Tower Terrace Road, the building housing Barrell House, Edward Jones, and other local tenants is now fully leased. Redevelopment continues along the 7th Avenue corridor with the recent completion of Hy-Vee Fast & Fresh and the nearly complete Cedar Rapids Bank & Trust branch.





# Calling All Startups!

The Business Connection

We want to spotlight your small business. Marion Economic Development Corporation is committed to supporting new businesses and entrepreneurs seeking to scale and gain awareness in our community and region. This starts by supporting your growth and helping you gain a new audience.

Here's how Startup Spotlight works. If you are a business preparing to launch or have been in business for no more than two years, we want to help tell your story. We're looking for all business types (retail and restaurants excluded).

*Startup Spotlight* is a space for startups to gather and reach higher through a unique platform. Each quarter we'll select a business that will receive a promotional package to include social media

pushes, a dedicated landing page, customized story about your business and more!

Are you interested? If so, simply go to [www.medcoiowa.org/forms/startup-spotlight](http://www.medcoiowa.org/forms/startup-spotlight) to fill out a brief form and we will be in touch with you. MEDCO will select one submission a quarter to submit 3 videos, 30-60 seconds in length.

We also welcome you to check out our first *Startup Spotlight*, Make It Memorable Consulting, leading up to our inaugural Startup Spotlight Meetup at Indian Creek Country Club on Thursday, April 7 at 8:30 am. Please see [www.medcoiowa.org/forms/startup-spotlight](http://www.medcoiowa.org/forms/startup-spotlight) for additional details related to Startup Spotlight, Make It Memorable Consulting, and/or Marion Economic Development!




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888 10th St., Suite 2      Ph: 319 447 4429  
Marion, IA 52302      Fax: 319 447 4434

## New MEDCO Investors

Culligan Water Conditioning  
Indian Creek Country Club

The Overture Group  
Great Western Bank  
Lynch Dallas  
DCI Group

Conlon Construction  
Rexco Equipment  
Flanker Media



By MEDCO President  
Nick Glew

You can review a one-page  
summary of the bill at  
<https://tinyurl.com/3vmj8c6d>.

# Tax Reform in Iowa

Early in this year's legislative session, the House, Senate and Governor each proposed tax reform packages that included steep cuts to personal income tax and the elimination of income taxes on retirement income. It was anticipated that each proposal would be negotiated during the month of March. However, this plan was fast-tracked when Governor Reynolds was selected to deliver a response to President Biden's State of the Union Address on March 1. The Legislature and Governor rallied around common priorities in the bill and passed legislation that was signed by the Governor on March 1.

The approved tax package will move Iowa's personal income tax rate from the 8th highest in the country to the 4th lowest. The compromise bill includes the following provisions:

- ▶ Cuts personal income taxes in Iowa to a 3.9% flat tax over three years. Currently, the top tax rate is 6.5%. It reduces the number of tax brackets to one.
- ▶ Eliminates taxes on all retirement income, as well as lease income for retired farmers.
- ▶ Decreases state corporate income tax rates over a period of years, based on available funding, until it hits 5.5%. Currently, the top rate is 9.8%.
- ▶ Phases in a reduction to 75% refundability to some tax credit programs, including the Historic Preservation Tax Credit and the Redevelopment Tax Credit. Phases in a 50% reduction in refundability to the Research Activities Tax Credit.

The tax bill was largely passed on a party-line vote. Marion Economic Development Corporation, together with our partners at Professional Developers of Iowa, advocated against original provisions of the Senate tax bill that would have manipulated the way a local municipality collected and spent Local Option Sales Tax Dollars. That provision was eliminated from the final tax plan.

Some provisions of the approved tax bill negatively impact how a developer can use Historic Tax Credits and other redevelopment credits. These may be provisions where we will advocate for change to the tax policy during future legislative sessions.

You can also monitor other pieces of legislation being monitored by our partners at Professional Developers of Iowa by going to [ialobby.com/billtracker/pdi](http://ialobby.com/billtracker/pdi).



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## You're Invited!

MEDCO invites you to learn alongside regional thought leaders while leveraging the tools and curriculum of Patrick Lencioni, the pioneer of organizational health.

**Learn More and Register:**

[medcoiowa.org/teamadvantage](https://medcoiowa.org/teamadvantage)



New Professional Development Leverages Market Leading Business Curriculum

Training Powered by MEDCO

The Business Connection

# MEDCO Launches Team Advantage

Marion Economic Development Corporation (MEDCO) invites the business community to participate in "Team Advantage," a new professional development series curated for corporate leadership teams in the region. The three-session series kicks off April 14 and allows participants to learn alongside regional thought leaders while leveraging the tools and curriculum of Patrick Lencioni, the pioneer of organizational health.

Each session will equip and empower leadership teams to bring tools and resources back to their company for deployment. Attendees can expect to learn about the unique gifts they bring to work, how to apply them, and how to work cohesively as a team to achieve true organizational health.

With workplaces returning to a more consistent way of operating, it's a good time to invest and bring leadership teams together and start to rebuild what was a very difficult time that pulled at the seams of many organizations.

The high energy, three-session series that will use curriculum from The Table Group and CAPAPRO member facilitators. Lee Eilers and Chad Greenlee with BerganKDV's Business Advisory team will lead the development series.

## Session Descriptions

### Session 1

**The Six Types of Working Genius | Thursday, April 14 | 8-12**

The Working Genius is a cutting-edge tool that helps individuals identify the unique gifts they bring to work. Training includes a four-hour large group session with individual breakouts for your team. Each participating company receives a 30-minute virtual follow up session with our facilitators. Price includes up to five facilitated Working Genius Assessments.

### Session 2

**The Five Dysfunctions of a Team | Thursday, June 23 | 8-12**

Empowered by Working Genius, key leadership will get vulnerable, engage in conflict, truly commit, and focus on results. Training includes a four-hour large group session with individual breakouts for your team. Each participating company receives a 30-minute virtual follow session with our facilitators. Includes all materials and assessments for up to five team members.

### Session 3

**The Advantage Playbook | Thursday, October 20 | 8-12**

"The Advantage" organizational health assessment will deliver four actionable steps for each team to achieve long-term, sustainable success. The Advantage serves as the foundation for organizational clarity for thousands of businesses around the world. Training includes a four-hour large group session with individual breakouts and facilitation for your team. Each participating company will receive a 60-minute pre-consultation to support team preparation. Price includes all materials and assessments for up to five executive team members.

## Registration Information

Team Advantage is \$4,450 per company for the full three-session package. Each registration allows for up to five individuals per company to attend.

MEDCO INVESTORS may participate at a discounted rate of \$3,650. Organizations may choose to purchase the first session only for a pro-rated cost of \$1,500 for a team of five (\$300 per person) for non-MEDCO investors or \$1,250 for a team of five MEDCO investors.

Learn more about the series and how to register: <https://medcoiowa.org/teamadvantage>



# Tribute Banners to Adorn Streetlights

The City of Marion, Marion Chamber of Commerce and Uptown Marion Main Street District for the 5th year in a row have sold out of the military tribute banners, to honor a veteran or active-duty service member with a banner on city streetlights.

The banners will go up around Memorial Day and remain up through Veterans Day. In addition to covering the cost of the banner, a portion of the sponsorship is donated to local veteran affairs programs. This will be the 5th year of the program, with already over \$9,000 donated to assist with veteran affair programs. Each year a limited number of banners are available for purchase and remain up for two years during the time frame noted above. Once installed, a map will be published of the location of each veteran or active duty service member sponsored.

To be notified when 2023 banner sponsorship opportunities become available, visit <http://tinyurl.com/marionmilitarybanners>. Requests will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis or until availability runs out.

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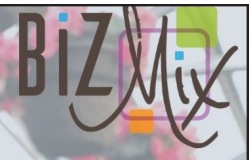
New beginnings

Love.

Meeting people

Grow.

Your network



Join us at  
Culver's Garden Center on  
Thursday, April 21st from 4-6 pm  
to help us kick off our 25th  
season of growing.  
Ribbon Cutting at 4 pm  
Drinks & Appetizers to follow

Culvers

Plant. Love. Grow.

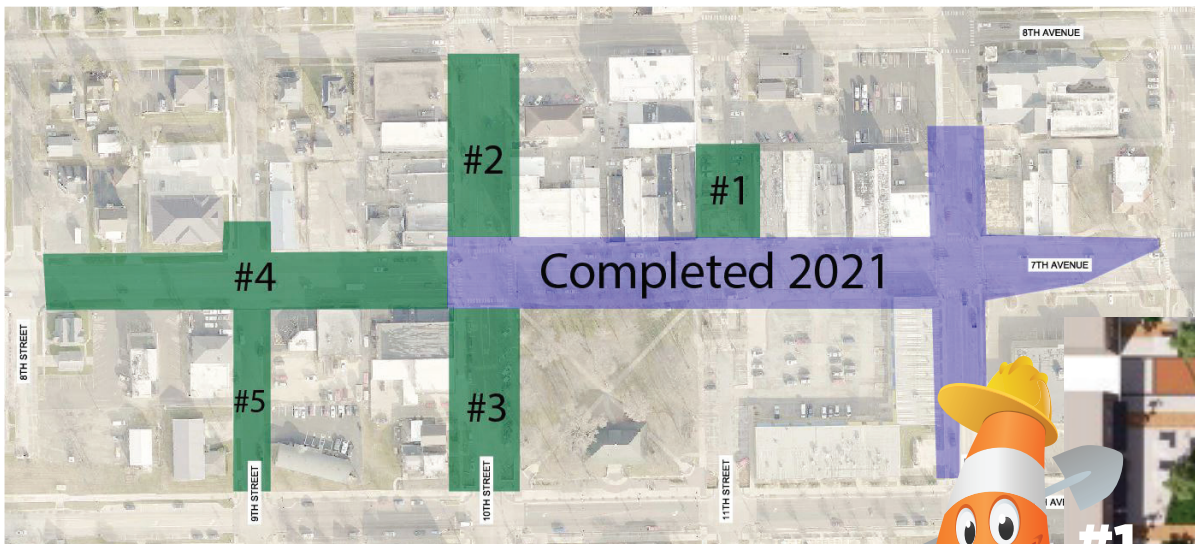


The Business Connection

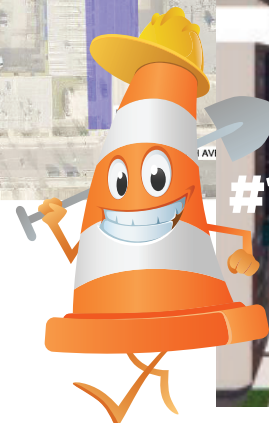
# Uptown to Complete Final Phases of 7th Streetscape in 2022

2021 kicked off the 7th Avenue streetscape construction project that replaces over 100 year old infrastructure in the heart of Uptown Marion. The area mapped out in blue below was completed in 2021 with the exception of a few amenities such as streetlights, benches, and plantings that will be installed this spring. Pedestrians will notice: addition parking north of the park, a slimmer roadway to naturally slow down traffic and created a safer pedestrian crossing, curbless streets to allow for the street to be closed during large festivals and farmers markets, and better ADA accessibility to businesses and parking.

Areas shown in green will begin the reconstruction process when weather allows this spring starting with #1; 11th Street North plaza area. This area will include fire tables, plantings, and community gathering space for daily use. Construction crews will then move on to phases 2-5. This part of the project has been phased out consecutively to allow for minimal disruptions and traffic closures. The 7th Avenue and 10th Street intersection will remain open in two directions throughout the year.



Thank you for continuing to support the Uptown businesses through this vital project!







# 2022 Uptown Events Calendar

Events in color supported by Platinum Community Partners

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Promotional efforts supported in part by the Marion Hotel/Motel Grant Program



Marion Arts Festival	May 21	9am-5pm
Uptown Marion Market	June 11	8am-Noon
Uptown Marion Market	July 9	8am-Noon
Eat. Drink. & Be Marion *	July 14	5:30pm-9:30pm
Uptown Getdown Flatland Ridge	Aug 4	6pm-9pm
Uptown Getdown Trophy Dads	Aug 11	6pm-9pm
Uptown Marion Market	Aug 13	8am-Noon
Uptown Getdown Schmidt Brothers	Aug 18	6pm-9pm
Uptown Getdown The Ice Breakers	Aug 25	6pm-9pm
Marion Oktoberfest*	Sept 17	Noon-2pm
Uptown Marion Market	Sept 24	8am-Noon
Chocolate Walk	Oct 7	8pm-10:30pm
Small Business Saturday	Nov 26	10am-2pm
Christmas in the Park & Peppermint Walk	Dec 2	4pm-8pm

\*Ticketed Events

Visit [www.uptownmarion.com](http://www.uptownmarion.com) for a complete listing of events happening in Uptown Marion

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Check out the Uptown Master Plan at [www.CityofMarion.com](http://www.CityofMarion.com)



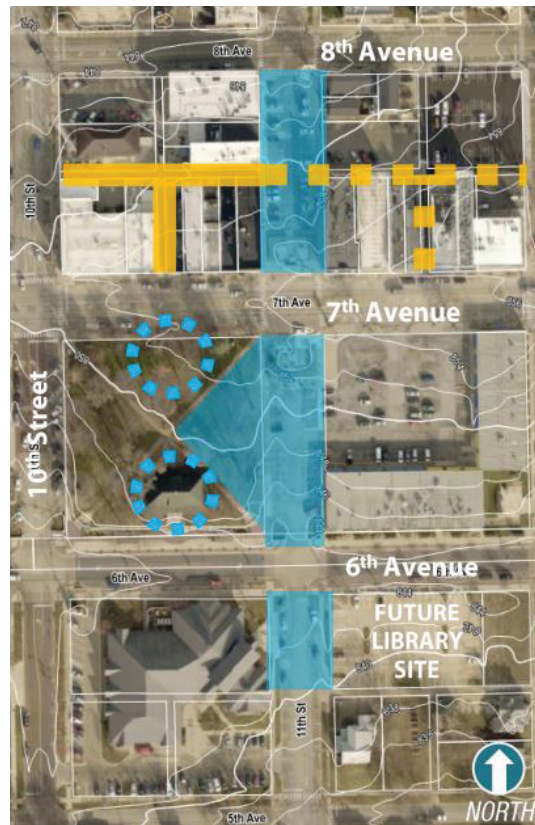
# City of Marion Kicks Off Final Design of Uptown Plaza

The Uptown Master Plan (found at [CityofMarion.com](http://CityofMarion.com)) was designed to guide the City of Marion in near-term and mid-term improvements to Uptown and lays out aspirational improvement goals for the long-term. Over the past decade, there have been six plans focused on Marion's central corridor, with a handful of citywide and metro wide plans where the central corridor has been a component. Instead of duplicating the hard work that has gone into previous plans, the Uptown Mast Plan combined those efforts and created four guiding principles: character of the district, redevelopment, programming, and infrastructure.

The Uptown Master Plan calls out 11th street, that has long been closed to traffic, to see upgrades in the near future. The area between the park and Broad & Main building is currently being used as a construction staging area for Broad & Main while the final designs for the area are being complete. The North Plaza (north of 7th

Avenue) will be completed this spring, while the Central Plaza (between 6th and 7th Avenues) is going through final design. RDG Planning & Design has been contracted with the City of Marion to develop the plans. A steering committee of local representatives and technical committee of city staff and partners have been engaged to guide the design and seek input from the community. The South Plaza (south of 6th Avenue) will act as an outdoor extension of the new Marion Public Library but final design has been deferred until a project is finalized for the old Marion Library site.

Central Plaza design elements were submitted through the ImagiNEXT community visioning project, in 2018. Ideas included: a performance space, public seating, enhanced lighting for safety and ambiance, water features, gardens, ice skating rink, depot upgrades, public restrooms, playground, art, and more!



Potential Plaza expansion area shown in blue. City Square Park improvement areas (Depot & Stage) shown as dashed circles.



# Chamber Kicks Off 2022 Strategic Planning

In January 2022, the Marion Chamber asked members to participate in a short survey about how changes in the business climate over the past two years has impacted their day-to-day operations.

Results were loud and clear with three main themes appearing: workforce and supply chain issues are a top concern for businesses and networking is a highly valued program activity of the Marion Chamber.

Guided by Lee Eilers and Catherine Maydew from Bergan KDV, the Chamber staff and board of directors began strategic planning using feedback from the member survey. As we continue to work our plan over the next two years, we look forward to collaborating, leading and being available to members. We serve your needs by Connecting, Advising, and Promoting you and the Marion community.

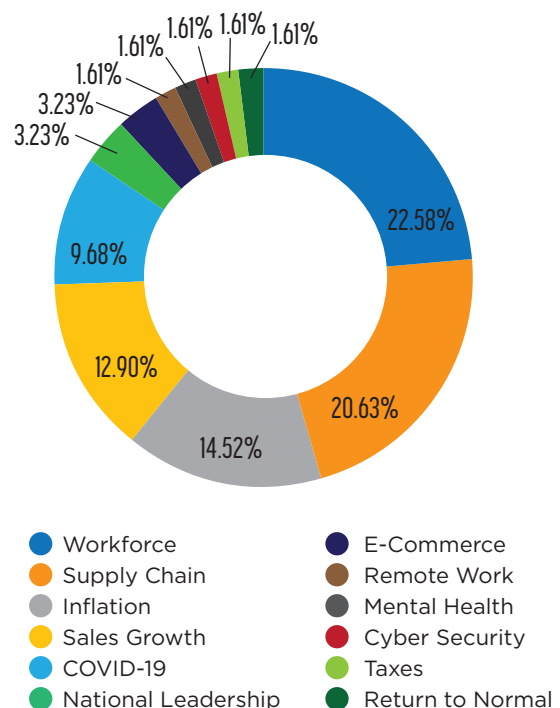
Two of the programs we will roll out this spring are the Marion Business Academy and Board Approved.

Marion Business Academy is a bi-monthly program providing short, professional development opportunities on topics that are important to our businesses. Content will be presented by topic experts from our membership and is designed to offer relevant, useful ideas you can implement quickly.

Watch for our Board Approved features coming soon to e-updates and social media. These quick reads will include book recommendations, podcasts, or articles that members of our Board of Directors found insightful and worthy of sharing.

Wake Up Marion continues to offer networking in 2022 with a full schedule of member hosts. Mark your calendar for the first Thursday of each month and plan to join us for coffee and connections. To view the full list of hosts visit [marioncc.org/business-networking](http://marioncc.org/business-networking).

What are the top 3 concerns for local business as we enter 2022?  
 What keeps you up at night?





Troy and Katie Benham joined by Jill Ackerman and Mayor AbouAssaly.

The Business Connection

# Benhams Receive Community Impact Award

Troy and Katie Benham of Marion have been announced as recipients of the first Morris F. Neighbor Community Impact Award. The announcement was made by Mayor Nick AbouAssaly at the Marion State of City address in March.

The Benhams were nominated by long-time friend Mike Tomash. They have lived in Marion for nearly 30 years and have spent that time building relationships and taking care of people in need through their generosity and service. Whether they are strangers broke down on the road, or employees at their family-owned business, Marion Goodyear.

"I can't think of two better people who share more enthusiasm for helping the community and making a true difference in lives," said Tomash. "Over the years they have organized Thanksgiving meals for those in need, led and organized cancer benefits, supported

our schools, and spearheaded the Miles for Smiles vehicle giveaway with the Salvation Army."

Tomash added in his nomination examples of not only the Benham's willingness to help others, but also the time they take to mentor and shape the lives of those they touch. "They truly want to see those around them grow and succeed. They might help an employee who is in a pinch financially, but they will also take time to coach them, so they don't wind up there again," added Tomash.

As business owners, you'll find the Benham's out supporting their fellow small businesses whenever possible. Troy often tells his family "we all have to take care of each other. How can I ask for people to come to Marion Goodyear if we aren't also supporting local businesses?"



## First Annual Oktoberfest Set for September 17

A new signature event is coming to Marion in September. Oktoberfest will be held Saturday, September 17 from Noon - 3 pm with VIP a hour from 11am-Noon. The event will feature over 30 breweries sampling their craft along 7th Avenue and traditional German games, like Hammerschlagen and stein holding, and music in City Square Park. Sponsorship opportunities are currently available, please reach out to Jill Ackerman, [jill@marioncc.org](mailto:jill@marioncc.org), for details. Watch for more information on ticket sales!

Soccer enthusiasts, Marion Parks & Recreation, and project partners celebrated the completion of a new **Mini-Pitch at Hanna Park.**

A mini-pitch is a smaller soccer pitch with hard surfaces and rebound wall that allows for a constant state of faster game play.



**Just Make Music**, 685 9th Avenue, celebrated its 1-year anniversary. The music studio has 9 instructors teaching a wide variety of instruments.



**Barrel House**, 295 Tower Terrace Rd, celebrated their grand opening. This is Barrel Houses' fourth location in Iowa and features upscale tavern food to lift your spirits.



Chamber Ambassadors joined the staff at **Morning Story**, 2931 7th Avenue Suite 400, for their grand opening. The restaurant is open for breakfast and lunch.



**Sheets Forrest Draper Insurance** celebrated their move to 631 9th Street, just behind their former location on 10th St. The business will celebrate 120 years in Marion in 2022!



The **Marion Water Department** and Board of Trustees were joined by Chamber Ambassadors to celebrate moving their administrative offices to 3050 5th Avenue.



**Athletico Physical Therapy**, 2791 7th Avenue Suite 200, celebrated its opening. The office offers convenient hours, free assessments, physical therapy, work injuries, and COVID-19 recovery & rehabilitation.

Hy-Vee celebrated the opening of the area's first **Fast and Fresh** at 2790 7th Ave. It features fuel pumps in addition to grocery items.

Chamber Ambassadors, staff, and directors were present as the **Marion Chamber** celebrated their new location at 1070 7th Avenue.



# HEATON & ASSOCIATES

Jeanne Matthews testing out Uptown's new ADA approved sidewalks



Leah Rodenburg with Alliant Energy, Sara Mentzer with the Cedar Rapids Metro YMCA, and Cydney Lovell with ITC Midwest visit at the November 2021 BizMix held at the new Marion Chamber and Uptown Marion offices.



Venture Academics is an innovative project-based learning model that launched last fall. Led by the Linn-Mar Community School District, this community based program is a partnership with Marion Economic Development and Community Promise. Venture Academics allows students to earn high school credit by meeting Iowa Core standards and applying knowledge to real-world projects. Venture Students were honored at a fall Linn-Mar Football game!



Ambassadors Bob Eustice, Tina Gossman, Rachel Hauck, Tami Peck, and Julie Lammers pose for a selfie at a recent BizMix.



Students work on installing dry wall at the Community Build home. Learn more at [www.medcoiowa.org/marioncommunitybuild](http://www.medcoiowa.org/marioncommunitybuild)



MEDCO hosted a networking session for area leaders to learn about MEDCO's role in the community, key strategies, and public policy updates.

Richard Luth with Crystal Group and Terra Heaton with Heaton & Associates, participate in the Marion Leadership in Action guest bartending night at Uptown Snug. The class was raising money for Winter Lights.



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# Welcome

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765 Boyson Rd NE  
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319-775-4524  
boysonheights.com

### Conlon Construction

3273 Ridgeway Drive  
Unit B  
Coralville, IA 52241  
319-626-2052  
conlonco.com

### Elevated Financials

319-350-1113  
elevatedfinancialsllc.com

### First Federal Credit Union

2590 6th Avenue, Ste 105  
Marion, IA 52302  
319-743-7806  
firstfedcu.com

### Great Western Bank

2739 1st Avenue SE  
Cedar Rapids, IA 52402  
319-774-1276  
greatwesternbank.com

### Just Make Music

685 9th Avenue  
Marion, IA 52302  
319-533-5828  
justmakemusic.org

### Marion Neighbors

563-590-2710  
bestversionmedia.com

### Morning Story

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morningstoryrestaurant.com

### Pro Quality Cleaning

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319-361-3854

### Pyle Inn on Pucker Street

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Marion, IA 52302  
712-240-9074

### Recon Roofing & Construction

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reconroof.com

### Stork Vision

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Marion, IA 52302  
319-438-2700  
storkvision.com

### Trims Barber Shop

1170 7th Avenue  
Marion, Iowa 52302  
319-377-4098  
trimsbarbershop.com

### Wilderness Fire Productions

678-769-7722  
narratorjames.com



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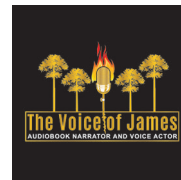


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