

TWO TOWNS. **ONE COMMUNITY.**



Mount
Vernon  **Lisbon**
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GROUP
A MAIN STREET IOWA ORGANIZATION

ANNUAL REPORT | **2024**

2024-2025 BOARD MEMBERS

Lisa White *President, Organization Committee Co-Chair*
Brenda Langenberg *Vice President,*

Organization Committee Co-Chair

Casey Krall *Secretary, Design Committee Chair*

Ashley Dunford *Treasurer,*
Promotions Committee Vice Chair

Brittney Edwards *Promotions Committee Vice Chair*

Courtney Frye Speed *EV Committee Vice Chair*

Dennis Jordan *EV Committee Vice Chair*

Casey O'Connor *EV Committee Chair*

Whitney Schreder *EV Committee Vice Chair*

Kim Heeren *Organization Committee Vice Chair*

Josh Randall *Promotions Committee Vice Chair*

Liaisons

John Bardsley *City of Lisbon*

Stephanie West *City of Mount Vernon*

Volunteers/Staff

Lisa Lansing *Promotions Committee Chair*

Deb Herrmann *Bookkeeper*

Anna Wilson *Social Media Manager 2024*

Christina Millikan *Digital Marketing Specialist 2025*

Drew Heck *Summer Intern*



PRESIDENT'S LETTER

2024 was a year of transition for the Mount Vernon-Lisbon Community Development Group (CDG), bringing with it new faces committed to the CDG's mission of developing and promoting our business environment and enhancing the quality of life in our communities.

- In May we celebrated semifinalist recognition for the Great America Main Street Award at Main Street America's annual conference. This is our 2nd time in three years being honored on the national stage!
- Anna Wilson was hired as our new social media manager and spent 12 months rebranding and elevating the CDG's social media presence. The impact has been significant, with dramatically increased reach on both Facebook and Instagram, more collaboration with local businesses, and best practices training for businesses and event volunteers.
- Volunteers, city leaders, board members, and community members said 'thank you' to Joe Jennison at a farewell gathering in June after he stepped down as tenured executive director.
- In July we welcomed our new executive director, Jessie Thurn. A resident of Mount Vernon and former Bauman's manager, Jessie has brought to the CDG exceptional leadership and organizational skills as well as fresh ideas and perspectives.
- To further enhance the city of Lisbon's efforts to foster growth and development, the Lisbon Innovation Committee was formed. Led by motivated Lisbon residents, this committee is focused on programs and initiatives within Lisbon.
- We were once again able to offer the Business Improvement Grants (BIG)—funded by the CDG—to local businesses and were pleased to announce five new recipients at the end of 2024. Supporting business through state and local grant access is an important part of our work and we are honored to be able to provide these resources.

All of these efforts, along with supporting outstanding events and festivals, are only possible because of YOU, our business, and individual donors. Thank you for caring enough to support the CDG with your gifts of time, talent, and treasure!

Lisa White President

MOUNT VERNON-LISBON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GROUP
MOUNT VERNON-LISBON COMMUNITY CHARITABLE DEVELOPMENT GROUP

We are pleased to recognize these businesses and individuals for their support in 2024!

Chief Supporter (\$65,000+)

City of Mount Vernon

Major Supporter (\$10,000+)

Linn County

Leading Supporter (\$6,000+)

City of Lisbon

Hills Bank

Visionary Supporter (\$3,000+)

Cornell College

Greater Cedar Rapids

Community Foundation,
Carolyn and Charles Wellso
Donor-Advised Fund

Mount Vernon Bank & Trust Co.

Pacesetter (\$1,000+)

A John Vander Zee, MD

Alliant Energy

Anonymous - Collection Bucket

Anonymous - Gary's Foods
Roundup

Anonymous - Music on Main

Bauman & Co.

Bridge Community Bank

Budget Blinds

Fuel

Gary's Foods

Koppenhaver & Associates, PC

Lynch Ford Chevrolet of
Mount Vernon

Mount Vernon Wrestling Club

Pearson & Virlee, PC

RTE Properties

Partner (\$500+)

Barbara Moore

Downtown Dental General
Dentistry

Hands in Harmony/Angel's Nest

Hertz Farm Management

Indulgence Salon Inc.

Iron Leaf Press

John and Thelma Rife

Mount Vernon Ace Hardware

Mount Vernon Insurance
Agency

Mount Vernon PNP

Palisades Family Dental

Sargent & Fortmann, LLP

Scarlett Boutique

Scooters

Sheila Borg

Stewart Baxter Funeral &
Memorial Services

Tom and Vicky Wieseler

Yock's Landing

Believer (\$250+)

ABCM

Anonymous

Bon Appétit

CauseTeam

Colin and Mary Squiers

Craig Engel and Catherine
Quehl-Engel

Dance Arts Iowa

Dick and Deb George

Ed Fordyce

Fred Burke

Glenn and Mary Beth Freeman

Happy Daze

Iowa Physical Therapy

James and Mary Evans

Kay Johansen and David
Osterberg

Mount Vernon Booster Club

Mount Vernon Investment
Center

Myrt Bowers

Patrick and Amy Haney

Polly Ann's Vintage Market

Robert Meeker

Stephanie West

The Local

Todd and Lisa White

U.S. Nameplate

Van Meter Industrial

Supporter (\$100+)

Abbe Creek Gallery

Ability Physical Therapy/
Elite Fitness

Addy's Public House

Amy and Jim White

Ann Currie

Anonymous

Ashley and Eric Dunford

Back Porch Pickers and Artisans

Barb and Wayne Ihde

Bass Family Farms

Big's BBQ

Bijou Movie Theater

Brittney Edwards and
Ethan Ball

Broulik Farms

Caroline and James Kelley

Casey and Bridget O'Connor

Casey's General Store

Chris and Brenda Langenberg

Chris and Jane Carlson

D&D Body Shop

Dairy Queen

Dan and Danielle Kumley

Dan and Catherine Stoner

Dan and Sheila Deininger

Dance Arts Iowa

Darrel and Middie Morf

Dave and Heidi Ryan

Dave and Kim Heeren

Dave and Laura Rega

Denae McGrath

Dennis and Angela Jordan

EchoVision

Harlan Graber

Hunter Construction

Ink Expression

Jacqueline and Richard Martin

Janet and Denny Dietrich

Jase Jensen

Jay and Arlie Willems

Jessie and TJ Thurn

Jon and Joan Rasmussen

Jonathan and Rachelle Brand

Josh and Olivia Randall

Jude Smith and Greg Raupp

Katrina and Les Garner

Kelley and Jerry Wells

Kernoustie Golf Club

Kliver Chiropractic

Leonard Broulik and Sons

Lisa and Doug Grief

Little Scratch

M&K Dust Control Inc.

Marie and Steve DeVries

Mark and Pam Krauss

Mary Horst

Michael and Linda Bigley

Michael and Susan Gates

Mitch and Diana Corcoran

Mount Vernon Area
Arts Council

Mount Vernon Eye Clinic

Nancy Emrich

Neal's Water Conditioning

Nina and Gary Scott

P&K Midwest

Rehab Center of Lisbon

Rich and Deb Herrmann

Richard Kohl

Roger and Marilyn Schnittjer

Shirley Ryan

Sue and Matt Margheim

Susan Brust

Susette Kortemeyer

The Locksmith Salon

The Perfect Blend and
Shortbread

Tim and Sara Kelley

Troy and Tracey Louwagie

Van Meter Industrial

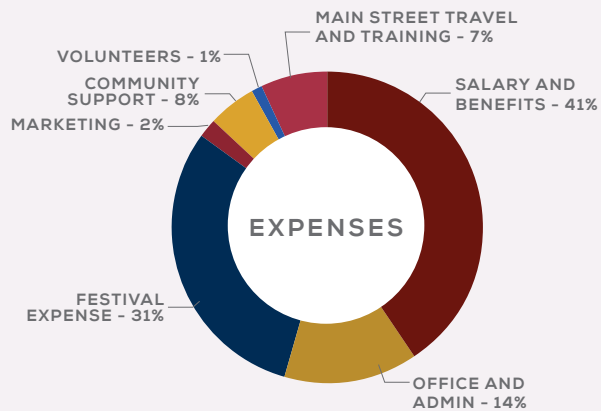
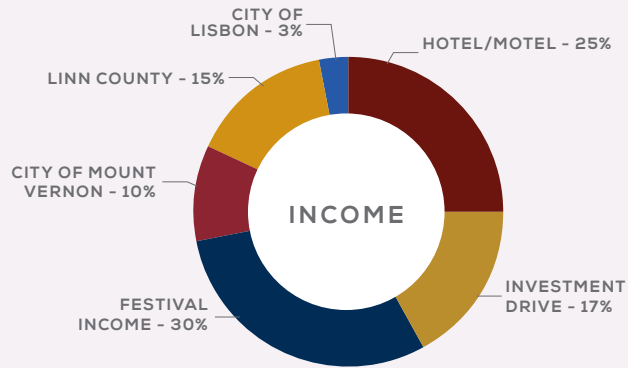
Vickie and Steve Kriz

Vintage 1891, LLC

White Tree Bakery

Wilkie Liquors

2024 FINANCIALS



The mission of the CDG is to develop and promote our business environment, including but not limited to our Main Street District, and enhance the quality of life in the communities we serve.

The mission of the CCDG is to advance the economic, cultural, artistic, and recreational vitality of the Mount Vernon and Lisbon communities and to support the activities of the CDG in projects that enhance the quality of life in our communities.

The Mount Vernon-Lisbon Community Development Group uses the Main Street four-point approach of standing committees:

Economic Vitality Committee focuses on strengthening local businesses, supporting short- and long-term economic growth, and revitalizing the business districts.

Design Committee is involved with the physical aspects of the communities including signage, lighting, streetscapes, historic preservation and the formation of a comprehensive look and feel in our downtown districts.

Organization Committee focuses on communications, fundraising and volunteer recruitment.

Promotion Committee focuses on organizing community events, and retail development. Many events and promotions are complementary, and all advance the mission of Main Street and the CDG.

2024 HIGHLIGHTS

Recognized for the second time as a **2024 Great American Main Street Award (GAMSA) Semifinalist** through Main Street America in May at the National Main Street Conference!

Anna Wilson completed her contract as the CDG's Social Media Manager. **Increased visibility of Mount Vernon-Lisbon** on social media was apparent, crushing the **10% growth** expected in categories such as followers, engagement, and reach. The CDG board voted to continue the contract position and hired Christina Millikan as the Digital Marketing Specialist (formerly Social Media Manager) for 2025.

Completed five ribbon cuttings for new businesses and new owners with our local ambassador group, including Hilltop Plants & Records, Sparrow Massage Therapy, Abbe Creek Gallery, The Bijou, and Mount Vernon Family Medicine.

Awarded five businesses a portion of **\$10,000** from the CDG's **BIG Grants** with a focus on improving building awnings, signage, facade lighting, and facade improvements. The CDG is excited to see the progress the following businesses make in 2025 with their projects: United Methodist Church of Mount Vernon, The Bijou, Vintage 1891, Bauman's, and Iron Leaf Press.

Employee Matching Funds accounted for over **\$3,000** in giving to the CDG!



Tenured Director Joe Jennison stepped down after a successful career spanning from 2010-2024. Jessie Thurn was hired as his successor, filling the position in July of 2024. Thank you, Joe & welcome, Jessie!

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION

The CDG is a volunteer-supported organization and our success is a direct reflection of the commitment our community members invest in our two towns. In 2024 we honored the following individuals, businesses, and committees for their dedication to our community!

Volunteer of the Year: Gene Freiburger

Business of the Year: White Tree Bakery

Committee of the Year: Lisbon Historical Preservation Commission

Citizens of the Year: Les And Katrina Garner

2025 INITIATIVES



The Main Street Approach is centered around Transformation Strategies. A Transformation Strategy articulates a focused, deliberate path to revitalizing or strengthening a downtown or commercial district's economy. Each Transformation Strategy is implemented through activities in the four broad areas of work represented by the Four Points: Economic Vitality, Design, Promotion, and Organization.

After leveraging data from a community survey, the CDG identified two Transformation Strategies. Over the next 3-5 years, the CDG will continue to assign and execute tasks to each strategy in Mount Vernon and Lisbon.

- Active Living: Development and support of inclusive and family-focused outdoor and year-round recreation and activities.
- Storytelling and Marketing: Redefine/Reestablish and support the story of Mount Vernon and Lisbon through branding and promotion, serving everyone who lives, works, plays, and does business in our communities.

**Interested in giving this year?
Donate at www.visitmvl.com
or use this QR Code.**



OFFICES LOCATED AT THE MOUNT VERNON VISITOR'S CENTER

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