



**STRENGTHENING NEIGHBORHOODS**

# Driving Change in Des Moines Neighborhoods

**ANNUAL REPORT  
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY | 2021**

Launched in late 2019, Invest DSM is a first-of-its-kind nonprofit and community development organization that combines public and private funding to nurture vibrant, healthy, thriving neighborhoods and reverse decades of disinvestment and decline in our city's residential areas.

Guided by national best practices, we partner with four Special Investment Districts (SIDs) to keep families in their homes, help residents build equity, support local businesses, and promote sustainable growth over time. This report summarizes the organization's accomplishments in 2021.



## 2021 Impact



**290+**

projects  
completed



**\$1.69**

million  
invested



**\$5.93+**

million of private  
investment leveraged

Invest DSM **empowers** residents and business owners in the Special Investment Districts to **improve** their properties, **strengthen** their social connections, and **create** a community that works for them.

## Special Investment Districts

### Columbus Park

**Strategy:** Purchase vacant lots and properties to build new single-family homes, adding value to the neighborhood and allowing current residents to build equity.

- **\$102,790** contributed
- **\$123,103** in private investment
- **16** homeowner projects completed
- **7** homeowner renovations in process



### Drake

**Strategy:** Offer incentives to existing homeowners to invest their own dollars in renovations and upgrades; support the reinvigoration of the Dogtown business district.

- **\$255,101** contributed
- **\$543,202** in private investment
- **83** residential projects completed
- **36** homeowner renovations in process



### Franklin Area

**Strategy:** Prevent creeping decline by unleashing the spending power of existing homeowners; create more affordable housing options.

- **\$715,298** contributed
- **\$2.48 million** in private investment
- **184** residential projects completed
- **110** homeowner renovations in process



### Oak Park / Highland Park

**Strategy:** Support the restoration of the historic business district at Euclid & 6th Avenues.

- **\$1.6 million** contributed or committed to commercial projects
- **\$9.5 million** in private investment leveraged toward commercial projects over two years
- **12** homeowner renovations in process or completed



We believe that **everyone** in our metro area — no matter their location, income, or demographics — **should have access to resources to invest in their homes and neighborhoods.**

## Invest DSM Programs

### Block Challenge Grant

**14**  
teams

**\$580,000**  
contributed

**217**  
participants

**\$1.39** invested by  
property owners for every  
dollar spent by Invest DSM

### Homeowner Renovation Program

**68** projects  
completed

**\$1.8 million**  
total investment  
(completed projects only)

**150+**  
projects under  
construction

**\$2.11** invested by  
homeowners for every  
dollar spent by Invest DSM

### Single-Family Developer Program

**3** projects  
completed

**\$195,600**  
contributed

**68%**  
average increase  
in property value

**\$777,397**  
in private investment

### Commercial Grant Program

**3** projects  
completed

**\$613,273**  
contributed

**\$1.9 million+**  
in private investment

"It would have taken us 5–10 years to complete the projects we had on our list without this program. Thanks to the funding provided, we figured out how to complete them in one year and are able to enjoy them while our kids are still small." - Homeowner, Franklin SID

## Special Projects



### Artist-in-Residence

Commissioned the city's first Artist-in-Residence, Eleanor Kahn, who created inclusive sidewalk artwork in Dogtown.



### Dogtown Chromatic

Supported a one-of-a-kind lighting installation in Dogtown to attract visitors to local businesses.



### Chuck's Restaurant

Supported the \$1.4 million full-building renovation of Chuck's Restaurant, a long-time business anchor in Oak Park / Highland Park. Renovated restaurant interior and exterior, as well as four second-floor apartments.



### Tree Planting

Partnered with Trees Forever to plant 550 trees in the SIDs over the past two years.



"Without Invest DSM, we would not have been able to afford to fix our major structural issues. We would have had to sell the building." - Oak Park Business Owner

## Funders

Funding for Invest DSM programs and organization administration is made possible by the City of Des Moines and Polk County, Iowa.

Thank you to the other funders and donors who contributed to Invest DSM for special projects in 2021.

