

The Intentional Tourist
by Jarrod McCartney
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There is an incredible transformation taking place in Red Cloud. What was once a diminished downtown is beginning to bustle with activity. The Potter Block that has sat abandoned for more than 2 decades now has 3 floors for the first time since 1961 and is well on the way to becoming the Hotel Garber. There's also a new bike shop, an art gallery, and restoration projects at the Cather Childhood Home and the Farmers & Merchants Bank are nearing completion. Businesses are expanding or springing up on the north end of town. On the southside, The Valley Child Development Center (TVCDC) is providing state of the art childcare, something that truly sets us apart from most of our peer communities. Back in the heart of downtown, 2 more buildings are either being restored or built anew and both will retain the look and feel of historic downtown Red Cloud.

The Red Cloud Community Fund (RCCF) served as the catalyst for the Hotel Garber and TVCDC through its community visioning sessions and the creation of its Heritage Tourism and Child Care accounts. We've been able to direct nearly \$160,000 towards community improvement in the last 18 months and raised another \$122,000 through our September Month of Giving campaigns. Since 1995, our fund has reinvested \$5.9 million back into the community, with \$2.1 million of that sitting in endowed funds. The interest from those endowed funds will provide a perpetual source of funding for the community's needs. All of this ensures a better experience for people living here, children growing up here, tourists visiting the community, and helps drive customers to local businesses.

Our successes have inspired others. Efforts to build a Recreation Trail have ramped up in recent months, construction has started on the Illian Ballfields Improvement Project, Heritage Tourism is working closely with the Donald G. Stratton American Legion Post #238 to try and restore Hardwick Park, and the City of Red Cloud is exploring further Downtown Revitalization. RCCF has often provided the spark necessary to get these projects ignited.

Your support will ensure that Red Cloud doesn't just survive but thrives—that these transformations will continue to make our community a great place to live for future generations to come.

Your help can make Red Cloud an even better place. Please consider giving a gift to your hometown this holiday season. You can reach us at: RCCF, PO Box 263, Red Cloud, NE 68970. Better yet, save a stamp and give online at <https://www.nebcommfound.org/give/red-cloud-community-fund/>. There, you'll be able to pick which of our accounts you want to give to and can even set up a monthly ACH withdrawal from your checking account. Donors who give \$1,000 or more to the Hotel Garber account will have their names placed on a donor wall in the Hotel.

We hope we can count on your support to help us continue to invest in the future of our hometown. Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays everyone!