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I've sensed a feeling of frustration from inside and outside city hall lately. I can feel it in both the public and private sectors of our community, and I'm not sure what to do about it. I often get asked, "What's going on?" or "What's the hold-up" regarding high-profile city projects. The movement of the Davenport Museum of Art to the downtown area. The renovation of John O'Donnell Stadium. The revitalization of downtown, including parking. The IMAX theatre. The development at 53rd and Eastern Avenue.

We seem to be stuck in the mud, my friends, and I think it's going to take all of us pushing together to get the ball rolling. You've heard me use the excuse that no one seems to be in charge, so I'm stepping past that and taking the lead myself. There is an excellent city council in place to make this first giant step, but I feel they, too, need a push. So here goes.

Let's move some of the outside sculptures from the old Davenport Museum of Art (DMA) to the grassy area just north of the Charles Wright Transit Center. Let's put up a big sign that says "future home of the Davenport Museum of Art" with an arrow pointing to the east. Let's finish acquiring the land now, then put up an eight-foot-high plywood wall around the area where it is to be built, like they do in big cities. Let's drill some holes in the wood and encourage passing citizens to peek in and watch the development. Let's hang posters and art projects on the plywood wall so the block starts to get the feel of the future DMA.

Let's scale back the John O'Donnell Stadium project to a realistic price. Let's renovate the locker rooms, training rooms, concession stands, and restrooms now. We were ready to move forward before, so let's stop stalling. Let's bring the park up to Major League Baseball standards, then help Kevin Krause make a go at it with his River Bandits. John O'Donnell was recently mentioned in Money magazine for its riverfront appearance! Remember, friends, that is the magazine that rated us 300th on the "best places to live" list just a few years ago! Someone is noticing all of the potential it has.

Let's make something happen downtown. There wouldn't be a better place to start than with the immediate construction of two parking facilities. We must realize that if we want to bring life back to our downtown, we must give people a place to park. I'm not talking about parking "ramps" (we all know how ugly those were), but parking garages where retail development could take place on the ground floor. We have been shown potential locations. We've been shown the funding mechanism. So let's do it! With added parking and action around the new DMA site, people will know that we're serious about our vision. Let's stop complaining about how we didn't get the Mark of the Quad Cities and make our own mark in Davenport.

I recently visited the IMAX theatre in Milwaukee, and all I can say is wow! This facility will put us on the map for entertainment and will connect visitors to the Putnam Museum, already a first-class facility. What a lift for the Fejervary Park area. Drive by, my friends, and you'll see houses being moved and construction underway. Let's all get behind this project for the wonderful potential it has for bringing visitors to our city.

We stand on the verge of turning the 53rd and Eastern project into something the entire city can be proud of. The Convention and Visitors Bureau recently showed us how many millions of dollars can be brought into Davenport once we have amateur athletic facilities. Let's build

softball and baseball facilities, soccer fields, a swimming pool, and a playground on some of the acreage, and finance it by selling off the rest of the land. Just think of it: a first-class sports complex built with money we can make through land sales. And when we're finished, we'll reap millions of dollars to our hotels/motels, restaurants, shopping centers, gas stations, and more! How can we lose? Let's partner up with Palmer College of Chiropractic in its effort to revitalize the center city. The college has made wonderful changes in its campus and plans even more. Let's team up as good neighbors and make its ideas a reality.

Let's team up with the Davenport Community School District and their $100 million-plus capital-improvement projects currently taking place in our schools. Let's give those schools good neighborhoods to be associated with. Let's strengthen our ties with the private sector and give businesses a reason to invest in our community. Let's not be afraid to remind them that we can't do it without their help. Let's show them that we can create a plan from the people that will be so good that no future elected official will want to alter its course. Let's just do something. We have had a vision for so long that we're blind to the fact that nothing is getting done. We keep doing the same things over and over but expect something different. Let's get Davenport moving as it's ready to take this first, long-anticipated, giant step. If we don't move forward now, my fear is that we never will.