



# Missouri River Commons

## Riverfront Activation

**We've seen it happen before – community vision and collaboration working together to transform our riverfront into a destination flowing with promise.**

The “promise” of 20 years ago was not only about development. It was also about creating a riverfront which attracted visitors and residents with quality events and activities. The parks departments of Council Bluffs and Omaha have filled the role of event organizers and landlords for years. Now, nearly two decades later, as discussions move forward for the next phase of riverfront development, a new coalition has been formed to lead the resurgence of activity along the riverfront.

Leading this crucial initiative, Missouri River Commons is a coalition of business, community, government and philanthropic leaders committed to the continued activation of riverfront land, facilities and venues on the Missouri River shorelines in Council Bluffs and Omaha.

The coalition is dedicated to activating the Omaha/Council Bluffs riverfront from a “sometimes destination” into a place where people regularly go for excitement, relaxation and entertainment – a riverfront alive with festivals, concerts and recreational activities.

Funded through the Omaha Development Foundation, Missouri River Commons – a program of the Greater Omaha Chamber – is a regional partnership between the cities of Council Bluffs, Iowa and Omaha, Nebraska.

**Missouri River Commons will:**

**Work with the Omaha and Council Bluffs Parks Departments to coordinate and expand activities along the riverfront**

**Lead the effort to develop a major riverfront festival as identified in the ULI Riverfront report**

**Support riverfront development initiatives identified by the Mayors of Omaha and Council Bluffs**

**Participate in and support the visioning and planning process for the Missouri riverfront**

**Raise funds as needed to support events and implement ULI recommendations**

# How do we get started?

The Urban Land Institute (ULI) study emphasized opportunities existing along the Missouri River shoreline, highlighting that the river is a common area linking the two cities, not a barrier between us. ULI recommended the creation of an independent organization with a sole focus on riverfront activation. The ULI panel felt strongly that the riverfront can be a year-round destination and a magnet for major events.

## Priorities from the ULI study:

### YEAR-ROUND DESTINATION

Enliven the riverfront through everyday activities – attracting more people, and ultimately, more events

Create all-weather outdoor play

Use the river as a recreational asset

Market the riverfront as a destination

### EVENTS

Program and coordinate events to maximize attendance

Create a diverse mix of offerings to complement the current offerings of the casino industry

Develop a joint new national-level festival

Initiate ongoing discussions among public and private event producers and organizations to leverage maximum economic benefit

