



FY 2019-2020  
STAKEHOLDERS REPORT

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# THIS IS WHAT WE'RE DOING →

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NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
**KEY PROGRAMS & IMPACTS**







## **A LITTLE ABOUT US**

Since 1967, the Nebraska Department of Economic Development (DED) has been focused on growing and diversifying the state's economic base, pursuing a good life with great opportunities on behalf of the people of Nebraska.

## **OUR PASSION**

As the state's lead economic development agency, our mission to grow Nebraska drives everything we do. It's what inspires our team of expert staff, who work hard to create economic opportunities for our fellow residents. It's why we're always trying to promote the best quality of life throughout our communities. And it's why we never sit still in our efforts to make the Good Life even better.

## **ABOUT THIS REPORT**

As DED administers economic programs and services statewide, we're focused on results. And we're proud of what we achieve on behalf of Nebraskans. This report highlights some of the key impacts of our efforts over the previous fiscal year. We hope readers will not only gain a more detailed understanding of what we do, but will share in our passion for growing our state.

For additional information about DED's mission, programs, initiatives and achievements on behalf of the state of Nebraska, visit:

[\*www.opportunity.nebraska.gov\*](http://www.opportunity.nebraska.gov)



## LETTER FROM DIRECTOR ANTHONY L. GOINS

Dear Governor Ricketts, Members of the State Legislature and Fellow Nebraskans:



I am proud, honored and humbled to present the Nebraska Department of Economic Development's (DED) latest Key Programs and Impacts report. This report chronicles some of our Department's most significant efforts and noteworthy achievements during the 2019-2020 fiscal year, when our pursuit of the vision to grow Nebraska remained constant during one of the worst natural disasters in state history and an unprecedented global pandemic.

The fiscal year began in the aftermath of the March 2019 floods. While Nebraskans were displaying their grit and determination, our Department swiftly administered state and federal funds to assist communities impacted by the devastation. Within weeks, we were able to reallocate \$3 million from Nebraska's Affordable Housing Trust Fund to help repair and rebuild homes in flood-impacted areas. Meanwhile, our staff worked rapidly to amend the State's 2019 Annual Action Plan to enable the use of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to address disaster recovery. Our response to the 2019 floods will continue, as we prepare to administer \$108.9 million in federal CDBG Disaster Recovery program dollars.

Shortly thereafter came one of the most trying times in not only our state's, but our nation's history, with the onset of the coronavirus pandemic. Our Department is proud to have administered over \$413 million in grants in the past nine months, funded by the CARES Act, to support Nebraska small businesses, livestock producers, communities and other members of the economy that were impacted by COVID-19; this is in addition to helping facilitate over \$4 billion in PPP and EID Loans from the U.S. Small Business Administration to aid our business community. As a result of our efforts and those of our teammates throughout the state, Nebraska was able to maintain, on average, the lowest unemployment in the nation throughout 2020, coupled with the most engaged workforce. Meanwhile, we were able to prioritize the health of our citizens as we managed the health of our economy, with monitoring the capacity of our hospital beds, ICUs and ventilators remaining at the top of our agenda. To my team and to our entire state, I say, "Job well done."

When Nebraska received federal funding under the CARES Act, my Department, backed by the leadership and support of Governor Ricketts, developed and rolled out a portfolio of grants to address key areas of need, and to stabilize our economy to propel a swift rebound. These included:

- The Small Business Stabilization Grant, which provided \$12,000 grants to cover small business operating expenses in the wake of COVID-19-induced employee and revenue losses.
- The Small Business Stabilization Grant for Livestock Producers, which provided \$12,000 grants to assist impacted livestock producers across Nebraska.
- The Workforce Retraining Initiative, which granted funding to each of Nebraska's community colleges for the development of scholarship-based training and certification programs; these will result in thousands of un- or underemployed Nebraskans obtaining rewarding, in-demand careers.
- The Rural Broadband Access Grant, which provided funding for the development of broadband infrastructure in communities lacking access to crucial services such as telehealth, telework and remote learning during the pandemic.
- The Gallup Leadership Training Initiative, which provided funds to enable small business leaders to attend a certified leadership training course designed to promote resilience and other positive outcomes.

In a subsequent round of grants, this portfolio was extended to include funding for even more impacted small businesses and sectors of the economy, including:

- Additional small businesses and livestock producers, community colleges and rural broadband;
- Restaurants and bars;
- Licensed personal service providers;
- Hotels and convention centers;



- Movie theaters;
- Event centers and sports arenas;
- Zoos;
- Ethanol producers.

This has resulted in our being able to assist over 25,000 establishments, including 12,200 small businesses; more than 9,200 livestock producers; over 1,450 restaurants and bars; nearly 2,000 licensed personal service providers; all six Nebraska community colleges; nearly 250 hotels and convention centers; 55 movie theaters; 29 event centers and sports arenas; three zoos; 23 ethanol producers; and dozens of rural community service areas lacking adequate broadband infrastructure.

Our way forward is unwavering, as we brand Nebraska as a technology state while focusing on growth through levers such as:

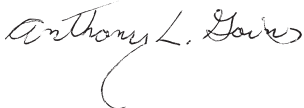
- Recruiting quality jobs, supporting entrepreneurship and expanding in-state businesses;
- Growing affordable housing; expanding our international relations;
- Attracting and retaining talent and promoting the skilled trades;
- Marketing our state by articulating the value of living and working in Nebraska;
- Expanding local connectivity by installing broadband for all citizens;
- Facilitating opportunities to do business at scale for organizations in underserved areas.

There are numerous reasons to be proud of what our state has already achieved. Last year for example, Nebraska ranked in America's top 10 states for business according to *Forbes*. Throughout much of 2020, we maintained one of the least-impacted GDPs in the nation. We've been named the #1 state for retirement (*Bankrate*), the #6 state for education (*U.S. News*) and the #8 best state for families (*WalletHub*). We're also the #1 state for low Veteran unemployment, and one of the top 10 states for Veterans overall (*smartasset*; *CNBC*). In 2017, 2018 and 2019, we won back-to-back-to-back "Governor's Cups" from *Site Selection* for achieving the most economic development projects per capita in the nation, and this year placed #1 in our region and 4<sup>th</sup> nationally.

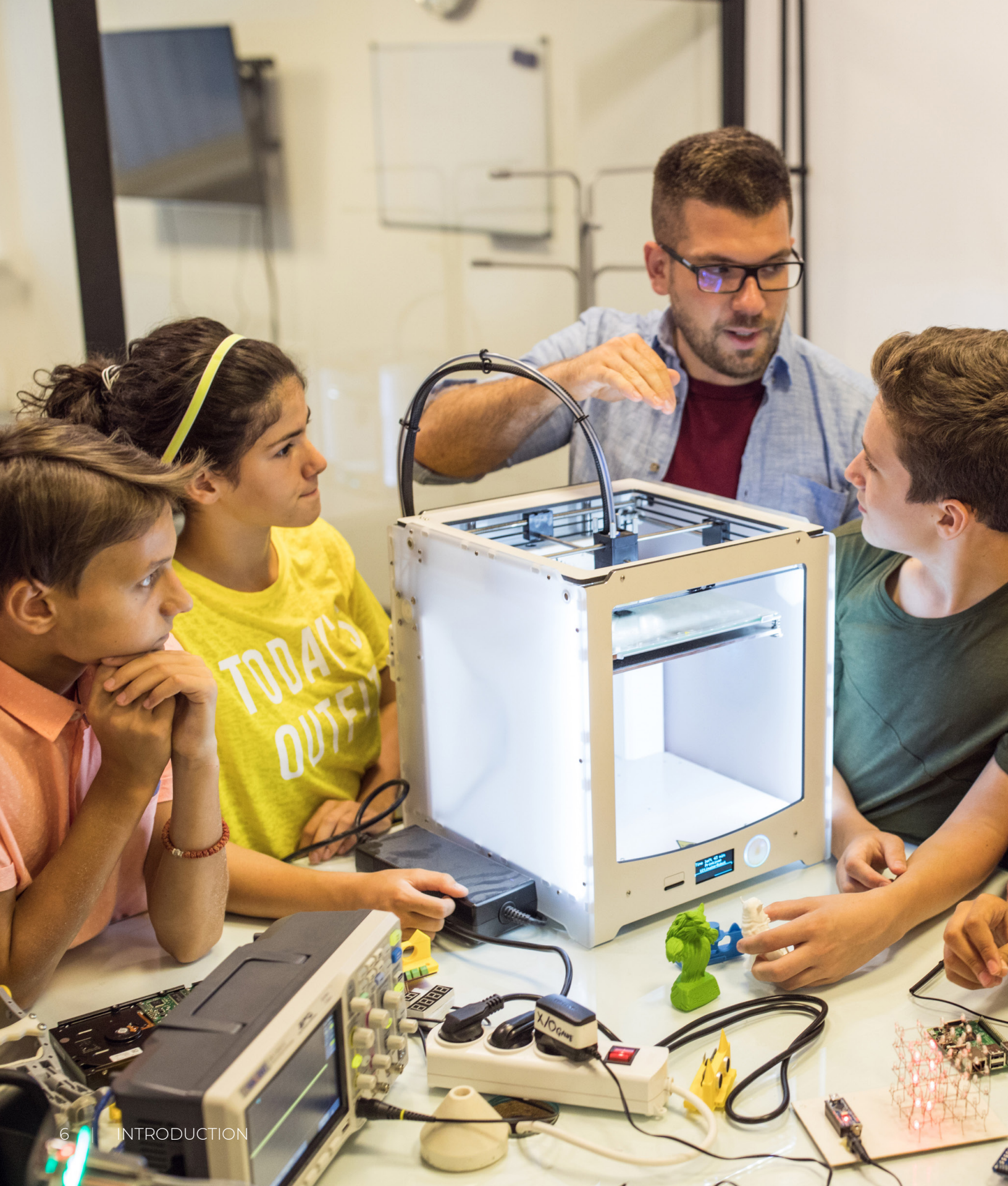
We have achieved these victories because our citizens exhibit leadership and grit — Nebraska has some of the hardest-working citizens and most welcoming communities in America — but also because together, we focus on the future and pursue a vision to do more good, and to cultivate and expand relationships. My Department is privileged to play an important role in that pursuit.

I personally hope that you find this report to be informative, and that it will serve as a tool to drive alignment in our quest to achieve mission-critical results. It is our duty to serve the citizens of Nebraska and to work to improve the quality of their lives. It is a pleasure to partner with you in my capacity as Director of Nebraska's lead economic development agency. I look forward to what we will accomplish as a team this year and beyond. At the end of the day, WE ALL WEAR THE SAME JERSEY.

Sincerely,



Anthony L. Goins  
Director





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# DOING MORE THAN EXPECTED



## 2019 Nebraska Silver Shovel Award: Winning Projects

Company	City/ County	New/ Expansion	Jobs Created	Investment Amt.	Industry
Avansya	Blair	E	N/A	\$50 million	Sweeteners
Google	Omaha	N	30	\$600 million	Data Center
Great Plains Beef, LLC	Lincoln	E	40	\$360 million	Meat Processing
Kawasaki Motors Mfg. Corp., USA	Lincoln	E	50	\$12.6 million	Aerospace
LinkedIn Corp.	Omaha	E	540	\$70 million	IT
Merck Animal Health	Lincoln	E	50	\$103 million	Pharmaceuticals
Monolith Materials, Inc.	Hallam	N	100	\$100 million	Natural Gas Product
Plum Creek Wind, LLC	Wayne	N	10	\$209.1 million	Wind Energy
The Scoular Co.	Seward	N	100	\$51.2 million	Pet Foods
Thunderhead Wind Energy, LLC	Neligh	N	15	\$309.1 million	Wind Energy



## GROWING THE GOOD LIFE: DED's Business Development Division

Nebraska's good life starts with great opportunities for individuals, families and businesses. DED's Business Development experts support the vision to grow the state by pursuing job creation and industry expansion, and by telling the story of a business climate where anyone – from employees and entrepreneurs to Fortune 500 firms – can be poised to succeed.

### Business Recruitment Team

Our Business Recruitment Team pursues opportunities to encourage expanding or relocating firms to establish roots in Nebraska. From tech giants like Google and Facebook to household names like Costco and Amazon, our Recruiters have been behind the scenes of some of the state's biggest capital investment and job-creating wins.

➤ In Fiscal Year (FY) 2019-2020, the 35 business attraction and expansion projects closed by DED's Recruitment Team generated almost \$1.6 billion in new capital investment in Nebraska, from companies spanning the tech, ag, manufacturing, bioscience, IT and other high-growth industries. Combined, these projects created 1,761 direct jobs across more than 20 Nebraska communities.

### *Google Makes Major Investment in Sarpy County*

In October 2019, Google broke ground on a \$600 million data center in the city of Papillion. Slated for completion in 2021, the new facility will create at least 30 high-paying tech jobs. DED business recruiters and State/local partners worked side-by-side with Google leadership to bring this game-changing investment to fruition.

### *Major Manufacturer Makes a Home in Gothenburg*

In October 2019, Iowa-based industrial vehicle manufacturer Curbtender, Inc. selected Gothenburg as the new site for its rapidly expanding production line. The company repurposed the recently vacated, 200,000 square foot Baldwin Filters facility to make a home for its new \$2.5 million investment – which will produce at least 50 new jobs.

### *Nebraska Takes Home Silver Shovel Award*

In June 2020, Nebraska received its second consecutive "Silver Shovel Award" from *Area Development*, the preeminent executive publication covering corporate site selection and relocation. Nebraska won the award for being national runner-up in the under-three-million population category for high-quality investment projects announced in 2019. (See chart on previous page).



Governor Pete Ricketts (fourth from right) attends the groundbreaking for Google's new data center in Papillion.

**Tools of the Trade:** *The Site and Building Development Fund and Customized Job Training Program*

Expanding or relocating firms can pick and choose from virtually anywhere in the nation that suits their needs. When it comes to competing against other states for high-quality jobs, it's our task to ensure Nebraska stays in the discussion. The DED-administered Site and Building Development Fund (SBDF) and Customized Job Training Program (CJT) provide two more reasons for top-notch job creators to select our state as the official home for their next investment.

Grants from the SBDF support the preparation of shovel-ready land, buildings and infrastructure to make Nebraska sites more appealing and cost-competitive.



*Kearney's Tech oNE Crossing was made possible in part by a \$100,000 investment from the Site and Building Development Fund. In 2019, Compute North, a Minnesota-based tech firm with operations in South Dakota and Texas, entered into a \$7.65 million agreement to locate at Tech oNE and create 10 new full-time technology and security jobs.*

➔ In FY 2019-2020, DED administered \$1.24 million in grants from the SBDF across six recruitment and expansion projects, with locations in Wayne, Douglas, Dawson, Madison and Buffalo Counties. These projects are slated to create at least 108 new direct jobs.

CJT grants can help employers defer a portion of the costs of training new or existing employees – a win-win for firms seeking workforce talent and the Nebraskans who benefit from new, in-demand career skills.

➔ Approximately \$152,000 in CJT funds awarded in FY 2019-2020 supported the training and upskilling of 76 Nebraskans.

## **Business Development Field Staff**

DED's Business Development Field Staff are positioned throughout the state, where their first-hand knowledge of Nebraska's diverse economic climate is matched only by their expertise at building productive partnerships. Field Staff are the eyes and ears of the agency, and a resource to assist communities, established business owners, new entrepreneurs and everyday citizens in any aspect of economic development – from support for business expansions, to workforce housing development and more.

➔ FY 2019-2020, DED Business Development Field Staff supported a number of major business expansion projects, from Endicott Clay in Endicott, Nebraska, to Handlebend in O'Neill and Parker Hannifin in McCook. Meanwhile, 107 Business Retention and Expansion Surveys conducted by Field Staff were vital to helping our agency gauge rural business needs. Throughout the year, field staff also played a major support role for communities and families impacted by the March 2019 floods, serving as a source of information and assistance while helping to inform DED's post-disaster response.





Handlebend owners Matt Dennis (black ballcap) and Michael Stepp (maroon ballcap) pose with their families at the O'Neill ribbon-cutting. (See page 12).





### *O'Neill Celebrates Grand Opening of Handlebend*

Hometown entrepreneurs Matt Dennis and Michael Stepp raised more than \$300,000 in project financing – including \$100,000 in Site and Building Development Funds awarded by DED – to renovate O'Neill's historic Shelhamer Building into Handlebend, a mixed-use commercial space that's now home to five local businesses, including the pair's own Moscow Mule copper mug company. DED Field Staff played an important role in helping bring the project to fruition.

### *DED Welcomes Three Newcomers to Leadership Certified Community Program*

Administered by DED Field Staff, the Leadership Certified Community (LCC) and Economic Development Certified Community (EDCC) programs recognize Nebraska cities, towns and villages that have demonstrated a commitment to growth and a preparedness to succeed in economic development. Alongside multiple recertifications in FY 2019-2020, three communities, Gibbon, O'Neill and Sargent, met the requirements for first-time entry into the program and achieved official LCC status.



*U.S. Meat Export Federation Nebraska Beef event in South Korea.*



*Lt. Gov. Mike Foley and DED Director Anthony L. Goins (2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> from left) meet with South Korean officials during a trade mission.*

### **DED International Business Staff**

Expanding Nebraska's international business, trade and engagement is a powerful way to create opportunities for our citizens here at home. DED's International Team is dedicated to

growing our state on the global stage – whether that's promoting local exports, attracting foreign job creators or telling Nebraska's story to forge new partnerships. We're on a mission to spread the word around the world that Nebraska is open for business.



## IN FY 2019-2020, DED INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS STAFF:

- ➔ Played a lead role in planning and organizing Governor-led trade missions to Mexico, Vietnam, Japan, Germany and Korea, as well as a Lieutenant Governor-led trade mission to Israel.
- ➔ Conducted DED-led trade missions to Italy, the Netherlands, Germany, Japan, Israel, the UK and Ireland.
- ➔ Hosted 19 reverse trade missions (i.e. , international delegation visits), with guests ranging from the Korean Consulate to the Prime Minister of Kazakhstan; the German-American Chamber of Commerce; and high-ranking officials from Israel, Indonesia, Ireland, Australia, Mexico and more.
- ➔ Helped recruit foreign companies that generated approximately \$2.5 million in capital investment and created at least 50 jobs in Nebraska.
- ➔ Represented the state at high-profile trade and investment conferences, such as the Berkshire Hathaway Annual Meeting in Omaha.







Gov. Ricketts speaks at Husker Harvest Days in Grand Island, 2019.



The Formnext 2019 trade show in Frankfurt, Germany featured Nebraska STEP recipient company, Tethon 3D.

### *The Governor's Council for International Relations*

Launched by Governor Pete Ricketts in 2017, the Governor's Council for International Relations, led by DED International Business Staff in partnership with the Nebraska Department of Agriculture, unites leaders from Nebraska's business, agriculture and education sectors to collaborate on opportunities for trade expansion, foreign direct investment and the advancement of international partnerships. Throughout FY 2019-2020, the Council played a key role in guiding Nebraska's strategic international engagement efforts.

### *German Trade Mission Promotes New Ag Partnerships*

With support from DED's International Team, Gov. Ricketts led a trade mission to Germany in November 2019 to promote Nebraska agriculture. During the visit, Preferred Popcorn of Chapman, Nebraska inked a new trade agreement with German-based Haase foods.

### *Inaugural International Programming at Husker Harvest Days 2019*

Spearheaded by DED International Business staff, Husker Harvest Days 2019 featured special programming for international guests, including a welcome reception and one-on-one networking opportunities with Nebraska ag companies.



*State Trade Expansion Program  
Helps Small Businesses Succeed  
Abroad*

While the international marketplace offers abundant opportunities for growth, the upfront cost of expanding beyond U.S. borders can prevent small businesses from achieving their true potential. By helping to defray certain export-related expenses — such as the cost of sales trips, international marketing materials and trade show attendance — the State Trade Expansion Program (STEP), led by the U.S. Small Business Administration and administered in Nebraska by DED — can help firms successfully launch or accelerate the export of their products and services.

- ➔ In FY 2019-2020, DED administered \$203,911 in STEP grants to 31 Nebraska small businesses; these awards contributed to an estimated \$7.5 million in actual export sales by recipient firms, with an additional \$17 million projected for the subsequent 12-24 months.
- ➔ Meanwhile, \$20,950 in STEP funding for the Nebraska Business Development Center and the University of Nebraska at Omaha supported international market research and programming designed to improve outcomes for Nebraska businesses engaged in the export process.

➔ **FACT:**

Over 3,000 U.S. small businesses receive STEP assistance each year, with every \$1 in STEP funding supporting an estimated \$66 in export sales. In Nebraska, more than 100 small businesses have benefitted from STEP grants to date, with recipients logging more than \$80 million in actual sales.



## Promoting Entrepreneurship, Spurring Innovation

Homegrown innovators and job creators are keys to a vibrant economy. Under the Nebraska Business Innovation Act (BIA), DED administers a high-impact grant portfolio that's custom-tailored to help rising Nebraska startups succeed across any phase of the life cycle. From seed funding, to financing for R&D, prototype development and commercialization, our goal is to ensure that the household names of tomorrow have the resources they need to succeed today.

Funding opportunities authorized under the BIA include:

- ➔ The Nebraska Innovation Research/Small Business Technology Transfer (SBIR/STTR) grant program, which provides grants to Nebraska-based firms that are applying to or conducting research under the highly competitive federal SBIR/STTR programs.
- ➔ The Microenterprise Assistance Lending program, which supports Nebraska nonprofits that provide customized financial and technical assistance to Nebraska startups.

- ➔ The Innovation Fund Prototype Grant Program, which can help high-tech, high-potential firms develop investor-ready prototypes of their cutting-edge products or services.
- ➔ The Nebraska Seed Investment (Commercialization) Program, which supplies capital to investor-ready startups in the form of matching equity investments held by Invest Nebraska Corporation, DED's nonprofit 501(c)3 partner.
- ➔ The Nebraska R&D Grant Program, which supplies funding to companies who contract with a Nebraska college or university or utilize said research and facilities to assist with an applied research project; or who are licensing technologies from a Nebraska institute of higher education.

The BIA also contains special provisions to spur innovation in the state's backbone industry, agriculture, and a closely related industry, bioscience. Businesses whose activities qualify under Innovation in Value-Added Agriculture are eligible for reduced matching requirements under the BIA's Prototype, Seed Investment and Academic R&D programs; the BIA general fund includes funding earmarked for award to Nebraska

companies specializing in bioscience innovation.

BIA Impact Facts:

- ➔ In FY 2019-2020, DED awarded BIA funds totaling \$4.02 million to support 57 early-stage companies. These companies went on to create 630 direct jobs at an average wage of \$51,476. Awards included:
  - ➔ 9 awards for seed investment (\$925,000 total)
  - ➔ 22 awards to support early-stage prototype development (\$700,643)
  - ➔ 4 awards to help innovative firms compete for federal research contracts (\$17,000)
  - ➔ 6 awards to match federal R&D dollars (\$696,851)
  - ➔ 5 awards to support R&D partnerships between Nebraska companies and academic institutions (\$236,000)
  - ➔ \$500,000 in awards to small business micro-lending organizations
  - ➔ \$500,000 to nonprofits that provide small business technical assistance
  - ➔ \$445,000 to companies specializing in bioscience innovation.



## Our Partner in Entrepreneurship: Invest Nebraska

Signed into law in 2009, the Nebraska Operational Assistance Program (OAP) — spearheaded in collaboration between DED and its nonprofit, 501(c)3 partner Invest Nebraska — is about growing the state’s venture capital network and creating an environment where entrepreneurs and angel investors can connect, collaborate and succeed.

A venture development organization led by successful entrepreneurs, Invest Nebraska specializes in advising and investing in early-stage companies. Under the OAP, Invest Nebraska has provided \$21.75 million to Nebraska startups in the form of loans, convertible debt and equity; by the start of 2020, these businesses had gone on to receive a total of \$141,636,552 in co-invested capital. Between 2012 and 2019, funded startups generated \$142,632,648 in follow-on capital, created 555 direct jobs at an average wage of \$62,123 and received 130 patents, with another 318 in progress.

In 2019 alone, Invest Nebraska reviewed 172 business plans, engaged 147 entrepreneurs and provided \$2,795,000 in financial assistance to 23 Nebraska businesses, plus operational assistance to another 256 firms. Companies receiving technical and financial support in 2019 went on to leverage an additional \$17.8 million in venture capital investments.

## White Dog Labs

Seed Investment/Academic R&D grant recipient White Dog

*“The investment that Nebraska has made in our company through the BIA program will ultimately lead to the state playing an even greater role in the food supply chain.”*

**Bryan Tracy, Co-Founder and CEO**

Labs is taking food science and value-added agriculture to a whole new level. Using techniques developed and tested in partnership with the University of Nebraska, White Dog is transforming typical ag products into cutting-edge ingredients and additives that promote sustainable human and animal nutrition.

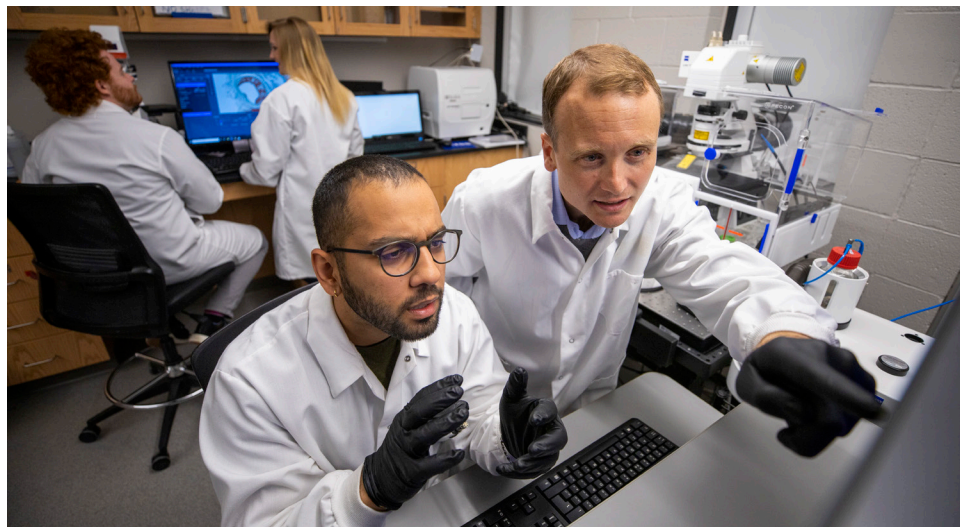
## Brewsense

Prototype grant recipient Brewsense has developed a unique

*“The BIA Prototype Grant enabled us to prove our concept and really push our technology to market. It’s safe to say we wouldn’t be where we are today without that early-stage support.”*

**Nathaniel M. Rasmussen, Co-Founder**

technology platform that helps brewers precisely monitor and control vital elements of fermentation, such as temperature and specific gravity.



*Translational Mechanobiology Lab at University of Nebraska-Lincoln.*

## Promoting the Good Life

Staff from DED's Talent Team are on a mission to attract, retain and develop our state's supply of families, talented young professionals, skilled workers, local leaders and everyday citizens. We forge partnerships and spearhead concerted initiatives that enhance and promote Nebraska's reputation as one of the best places in America to live, work and stay.

### *The Good Life is Calling Website*

During the 2019 Governor's Economic Development Summit, Governor Ricketts, DED and the Nebraska Department of Labor debuted "The Good Life is Calling" – a new website designed to inform and inspire people to live, work and keep their families in Nebraska.

### *The Good Life Ambassadors Program*

Where do you find 1.9 million sales and marketing leaders? Right here at home, of course. Launched by DED's Talent Team in 2019, the Good Life Ambassadors Program recruits everyday Nebraskans to spread the word via social media about what makes our state such a great place to call home. Visit [goodlifeambassadors.com](http://goodlifeambassadors.com).

### *The Developing Youth Talent Initiative*

Created by Governor Pete Ricketts in 2015, the Nebraska Developing Youth Talent Initiative (DYTI) is inspiring young Nebraskans to explore careers in manufacturing, information technology, engineering, healthcare and other STEM disciplines.

DYTI grants have reached more than 22,000 seventh and eighth grade students across 59 Nebraska school districts. In FY 2019-2020 alone, DYTI awards totaling \$250,000 to three private-academic partnerships were slated to introduce up to 5,000 young Nebraskans to STEM concepts and careers.

### *DYTI Grant Promotes IT and STEM Skills in Gering*

Gering's Vistabeam Inventive Wireless received a \$103,000 DYTI award to outfit the IT lab at Gering Junior High School with high-tech software and equipment, creating a state-of-the-art IT and STEM learning environment that reached more than 450 students in its first year.

### *Intern Nebraska*

One of the best ways to attract and retain skilled young professionals is to connect them with ample opportunities to succeed. The Intern Nebraska (InternNE) grant program promotes the growth of internships across the state by making it easier for businesses to utilize interns. InternNE grants can reimburse up to 50% of an intern's wages, up to \$5,000 for eligible students.

➡ In FY 2019-2020, DED administered \$104,500 in InternNE grants, helping 68 Nebraska firms create new internships and attract talented young professionals. Since its inception, InternNE has helped over 1,300 Nebraska companies create nearly 3,200 internships statewide.

### *DED Talent Team Organizes Second Annual Young Nebraskans Week*

In September 2019, communities across the state joined in the celebration of Young Nebraskans Week – an event dedicated to recognizing, supporting and connecting the talented young professionals who will lead the Nebraska economy and its communities into the future.





*"Our Developing Youth Talent Initiative is introducing the next generation of students to career fields where great-paying opportunities continue to grow. The program helps connect kids with those opportunities, positioning Nebraska to retain more of the great people who have helped build the Good Life into the best place in the world to live, work, and raise a family."*

**Governor Pete Ricketts**

**FACT:** Since 2015, DYTl grants have introduced an estimated 22,500 students across 59 Nebraska school districts to manufacturing, IT and other STEM disciplines.

**Visit:** [thegoodlifeiscalling.com](http://thegoodlifeiscalling.com)

**Follow:** Facebook: Nebraska Good Life

Instagram: [@nebraskagoodlife](https://www.instagram.com/nebraskagoodlife)



DOING  
THE  
RIGHT  
THING





# GROWING THE HOUSING STOCK: DED's Housing Division

Available, affordable, quality housing opportunities are a catalyst for economic growth potential. Our Housing Team administers an array of state and federal programs designed to empower communities as they examine local needs, tackle financial challenges and pursue goals for plentiful dwelling-spaces and safe, vibrant neighborhoods.

## *The Nebraska Affordable Housing Trust Fund*

Established in 1996, the Nebraska Affordable Housing Trust Fund (NAHTF) is the state's largest resource for affordable housing development. NAHTF awards enable communities to execute on a wide array of housing activities that benefit households at

or below 120% of the area median income — from new unit construction (owner or rental) to housing rehabilitation and homebuyer down payment assistance.

- ➔ In FY 2019-2020, NAHTF awards of \$7,571,750 supported the construction or rehabilitation of 200 housing units across the state, while financially assisting 10 homebuyers.

## *NAHTF Supports Flood Victims and their Communities*

In 2019, DED amended its NAHTF Qualified Allocation Plan to devote \$3 million to disaster recovery housing aid in the wake of the catastrophic

flooding in March. Six recipients subsequently received \$500,000 each to repair, relocate or rehabilitate damaged homes. In all, 63 units were funded across four Nebraska communities and two counties.

## *NAHTF Helps Transform Storied Apartments in Scottsbluff*

Lt. Gov. Foley visited Scottsbluff to tour the newly-renovated Eastwood Apartments. A former boarding house, hotel and low-income apartment complex, the Eastwood deteriorated into a problem property throughout the decades before a grant from the NAHTF supported a full-scale restoration.



*Down payment-assisted home in Madrid.*



Gov. Ricketts attends a groundbreaking for York's Creekside Apartments.



Creekside Apartments, interior.

### *Rural Workforce Housing Fund: Ongoing Impacts*

Signed into law by Governor Pete Ricketts in 2017, the Rural Workforce Housing Fund (RWHF) was created to help rural communities increase their supply of quality, affordable housing to accommodate a growing workforce.

RWHF funds are invested in counties with a population of less than 100,000 to finance activities ranging from new owner-occupied or rental construction to substantial housing repair or the rehabilitation/conversion of property into housing units.

Since its inception and an initial \$7 million award distribution, the RWHF has helped finance more than 620 housing units in 18 communities, with over \$79.5 million invested to date by local governments in collaboration with public-private stakeholders. Following the initial success of the program, the State Legislature allocated a subsequent \$10 million for award in 2021.

### *RWHF Spurs New Housing Opportunities in York*

Gov. Ricketts visited York last summer to cut the ribbon on the Creekside Apartments. Made possible by a



\$323,000 grant from the RWHF, plus matching funds from 26 public-private investors, the new complex features 48 one-, two- and three-bedroom units at a total project cost of \$5.2 million.

*The HOME Investment Partnerships Fund*

HOME is the nation’s largest federal resource for affordable housing development. HOME grants can finance a variety of housing activities that directly benefit low-income individuals and families and their communities, such as new and affordable rental housing development, homebuyer assistance and nonprofit operating assistance.

**RWHF IMPACTS AS OF DEC. 21, 2019:**

<b>Initial State investment:</b>	\$7,009,000
<b>Recipient organizations:</b>	14
<b>Local match generated:</b>	\$10,121,122
<b>Total available funds:</b>	\$17,130,122
<b>Total funds invested 2018-2019:</b>	14,230,652
<b>Communities impacted:</b>	18
<b>Housing units planned, built or rehabilitated:</b>	619
<b>Total project costs:</b>	<b>\$79,523,620</b>

**HOME  
IMPACT  
FACTS:**

Since 2014, DED-administered HOME awards of \$17.58 million have helped finance the development of nearly 800 rental and 40 homebuyer units across 27 Nebraska communities.



*Newly-built rental units in Bloomfield.*

➔ In FY 2019-2020, DED awarded \$3.2 million in HOME funding under the DED/Nebraska Investment Financing Authority (NIFA) joint application cycle, resulting in the development of 111 new rental units in Bellevue, Fremont, Grand Island and Cozad, and 36 rehabilitated rental units in Grand Island.

Also during the fiscal year, DED invested a total of \$749,500 into three HOME Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDO). CHDOs are community-based nonprofits who work to provide decent, affordable housing to low- and moderate-income persons. These awards resulted in the construction of a new home in Chadron, with direct homebuyer assistance for a low-income family; the purchase,

rehabilitation and resale of four housing units in northeast Nebraska; and the construction of two new units in the city of Lincoln.

*The National Housing Trust Fund* Administered in partnership between DED and NIFA, the National Housing Trust Fund (HTF) is a federal resource dedicated to serving very low-income individuals and families (at or below 30% of the area median income), including the homeless.

➔ In FY 2019-2020, DED invested \$3,169,200 in HTF funding into the communities of Fremont and Omaha. This financing will support the construction of 103 low-income rental units in the city of Omaha and 43 rental units in the city of Fremont.

### *Community Development Block Grant: Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation*

The federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program provides flexible funding opportunities to help communities pursue goals ranging from economic development to public health and safety improvements. CDBG's Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation opportunity can finance transformative home repairs that benefit low- and moderate-income households and can revitalize entire neighborhoods.

➔ In FY 2019-2020, the \$1.49 million in CDBG OOR funding administered by DED helped rejuvenate 51 homes in four Nebraska communities, with essential upgrades ranging from new siding and roofing to electrical, plumbing or accessibility improvements.



*New Village Manor duplex in Stuart.*





## National Housing Trust Fund Creates Better Outcomes for At-Need Residents in Sidney

With local investment and financial support from the National Housing Trust Fund, partners in Sidney were

*“Imagine having a place to live for the very first time where you have working appliances that have been provided for you; where things like the kitchen or bathroom are designed to accommodate your physical needs; and that you can afford on an extremely low monthly income. It’s liberating. It can lift you up, and give you a completely new quality of life. That’s what fair housing, and my job, is all about.”*

**Nancy Bentley, CEO, Housing Partners of Western Nebraska**

able to turn a formerly vacant lot into the brand-new Canterbury Estates. This 10-unit apartment complex was designed exclusively with individuals and families in mind who live at or below 30% of the median area income, especially people with accessibility-related needs.

### NAHTF, HOME AND HTF IMPACT FACTS:

DED awarded a total of \$19,187,450 million in NAHTF, HOME and HTF funds in FY 2019-2020. In all, these awards impacted 40 communities in 36 counties across Nebraska and supported the construction or rehabilitation of 624 rental or homeowner units valued at more than \$79 million in total project costs. Meanwhile, housing funds awarded by DED during the fiscal year were matched by more than \$54 million in public and private investments at the local level.



# DOING WHAT COUNTS





# COMMUNITIES PEOPLE LOVE TO CALL HOME: DED's Community Development Division

Growing Nebraska is about developing safe, vibrant, livable communities that people love to call home. Our community development grant programs can help cities, towns and villages plan and execute impactful projects that result in new amenities, better opportunities and a higher quality of life.

## *Civic and Community Center Financing Fund (CCCCF)*

Administered by DED on behalf of the State of Nebraska, the CCCFF program is designed to support communities as they carry out projects – from new city parks and aquatic centers to restored or repurposed historic auditoriums and everything in-between – that preserve, develop or improve local quality of life.

➔ In FY 2019-2020, DED awarded \$5,397,775 in CCCFF funding to 22 recipient communities. CCCFF awards during the fiscal year leveraged more than \$20 million in matching local investments, financing projects worth more than \$25.4 million. Of the total awards, \$77,250 will be used by communities for planning projects, with good planning being central to the success of the CCCFF program.

## CCCCF Communities and Projects: FY 2019-2020

City of Tilden	New Civic/Community Center Study
City of Laurel	New Civic Center
City of Lexington	Indoor Recreation Center Study
City of Wayne	City Activity Center (CAC) Study
City of Scottsbluff	Rebuild and Renew 23 Club Baseball Park
City of York	City Auditorium Renovations
City of Cambridge	Municipal Swimming Pool Renovation
City of Grant	New Swimming Facility
City of Bridgeport	Tennis Court Renovation
City of Ainsworth	Pool/Park Feasibility Study
City of Alliance	Sunken Gardens Renovations
City of Arapahoe	Public Library Renovations
City of Norfolk	Johnson Park North Fork River Restoration Project
Village of Dorchester	Community Facilities Master Plan
City of Atkinson	Community Center Renovations
City of Wood River	Public Library/Senior Center Study
City of Hebron	New Aquatic Facility
City of Hooper	Project Dream Baseball Field Renovation
City of Scribner	Mohr Auditorium Renovations
Village of Table Rock	Table Rock Park Improvements
City of Alma	Auditorium Feasibility Study
Village of Roseland	New Community Center

*The Community Development Assistance Act*

Bringing a community betterment project to fruition often involves rallying beyond funding challenges. The Community Development Assistance Act (CDAA) program can enhance local fundraising efforts by providing a 40% State tax credit to individuals and entities who make cash contributions or provide services and materials in support of approved community betterment projects.

➔ DED awarded \$182,600 in CDAA tax credits during FY 2019-2020 to support impactful economic development projects in North Platte, Albion, Kearney, Columbus and Wood River. These awards helped incentivize nearly \$7 million in public-private investments and donations. CDAA projects funded during FY 2019-2020 include:

- ➔ 1 Substance Abuse Coalition
- ➔ 2 Childcare Centers
- ➔ 1 Movie Theater
- ➔ 1 Housing Rehabilitation Program

*CDAA Program Makes a Splash in Beatrice*

In Beatrice, CDAA tax credits helped former mayor Allen Grell and his fellow Sertoma Club members raise over



*Sertoma Astro Park Splash Pad, Beatrice.*

\$80,000 in donations to build a splash pad at Sertoma Astro Park — a popular attraction on hot summer days.

“I think it’s important that every community learn about CDAA and how to advertise it, so that it can be leveraged to achieve local goals,” Grell said. “I also encourage anyone interested in contributing, in serving the community, to get in touch with their local government or nonprofit, or DED, to learn more about the CDAA program.”

*Community Development Block Grant*

A federal program led by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and administered by DED on behalf of Nebraska’s non-entitlement communities (i.e., communities other than Lincoln, Omaha, Bellevue or Grand Island), CDBG provides funding to help communities tackle a wide array of local objectives, from tourism and



economic development to public health and safety improvements — and everything in-between.

DED currently administers nine CDBG funding opportunities, all of which support the core objectives of benefitting low-to-moderate income persons, preventing or eliminating slum and blight conditions, or solving catastrophic health and safety threats.

\$13.05 million in CDBG funds administered by DED during the fiscal year leveraged an additional \$8.57 million in matching local investments. These projects focus on primarily benefitting low- and moderate-income residents in Nebraska.

## IN FY 2019-2020, DED AWARDED CDBG FUNDING TO SUPPORT 41 IMPACTFUL PROJECTS THROUGH THE FOLLOWING FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES:

Downtown Revitalization	\$2,826,490
Emergent Threat	\$2,356,370
Owner Occupied Rehabilitation	\$1,492,000
Public Works	\$2,780,307
Planning	\$410,739
Tourism Development	\$850,000
Water/Wastewater	\$2,337,905

### *CDBG Program Supports Flood Recovery, Ongoing Disaster Preparedness and Prevention*

In the wake of the March 2019 flooding, at the direction of Gov. Ricketts, DED created an entirely new CDBG funding opportunity — Emergent Threat (EM) — to support community flood relief.

In 2019, Dodge County, the Cities of Fremont/Inglewood and the City of Wood River were the first to benefit from this new source of funding. In Dodge County and Fremont/Inglewood, EM funds will help to repair and improve major levees that were damaged by the floods. In Wood



Platte River flooding in Sarpy and Douglas Counties.

River, the funds are contributing to the reconstruction of vital storm water drainage systems.

Also in 2019, DED awarded CDBG Planning funds to the communities of Greeley, Fremont/Inglewood and Schuyler for the purposes of flood planning and mitigation. The former is using the funds to study the local levee system and determine improvements that can be made to prevent future occurrences; the middle will evaluate severe damage to the local wastewater treatment facility; the latter will evaluate its municipal drainage system to mitigate future floods.

*Lt. Gov. Foley, Gothenburg Residents Celebrate CDBG-Supported Sun Theatre Improvement Project*

The Sun Theatre has been serving up opera, silent movies, the performing arts, modern-day cinema and more for residents of Gothenburg and nearby rural communities for over a century. Now — thanks to a \$425,000 CDBG award and more than \$100,000 in local donations — the “Revitalize the Sun” project has brought new life to the historic theater while making it more accessible than ever to patrons of various ages and abilities.



*Lt. Gov. Foley visits Gothenburg to celebrate the start of the Revitalize the Sun Project.*



*Exterior of the Driftwood, downtown Ogallala.*

*CDBG-Funded Entertainment Venue Draws Tourists to Downtown Ogallala*

In Ogallala, CDBG funding helped transform a 99-year-old vacant hardware store into one of the region's top

tourism destinations. Part restaurant, taproom, concert venue and meeting space, “The Driftwood” gives visitors to Lake McConaughy the perfect reason to venture downtown after a day at the beach.









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