

# *My Town, Lancaster County*



**CIRD Workshop – Final Report**



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# Introduction

In 2014 the Lincoln-Lancaster County Planning Department, Lancaster County Board of Commissioners, and Lancaster County Extension Office of the University of Nebraska completed an application for a Citizens' Institute on Rural Design award on behalf of the small towns of Lancaster County. The award was to provide funding for a rural design technical workshop that would bring information and resources to the small towns of Lancaster County to initiate a conversation regarding the particular challenges and opportunities afforded to small towns which share their county with a major city.



**County Landscape**

Lancaster County is approximately 846 square miles, 91 of which are within the City of Lincoln, Nebraska's State Capital. Lancaster County lies within the Platte River Valley in southeastern Nebraska, a little more than 50 miles west of the Missouri River. The natural historical features are dominated by mixed grass prairie, rolling hills, and stream terraces. While dominated by Lincoln, there are twelve incorporated, and nine unincorporated towns in Lancaster County. Of the twelve incorporated towns, two, Hickman and Waverly, are of a size that qualifies them as Cities of the Second Class, according to Nebraska State Statute. The other ten are classified as Villages.

Since the 1960s, the City of Lincoln has made up about 90% of the County population, with the remaining population being divided between the other towns in the County and the rural and unincorporated areas. This 10% of the County population has seen a shift over the years from about 2% in the incorporated towns and 8% on acreages and farms, to a current split of about 3% in towns and 7% in the unincorporated area. The 2040 Comprehensive Plan for Lincoln and Lancaster County assumes the shift will continue and that 4% of people will live in incorporate villages and cities by 2040, with the remaining 6% on acreages, farms and in the unincorporated villages in the County. Lancaster County has experienced about 1.3% growth per year over the last several decades. Growth is seen in Lincoln, the other small towns, and in the rural areas of the County, however, the annual percent growth for the small towns and unincorporated areas of the County has been higher than the annual percent growth of the City of Lincoln.

Lancaster County is about 84% white, 5.85% Hispanic, 3.38% African American, and 3.47% Asian. The median age in Lancaster County is 31.4 years and the median age for the City of Lincoln is 30.6 years. If Lincoln makes up about 90% of the County population, the median age in the rural part of the County is closer to 38.6 years, significantly higher than the City of Lincoln. A review of 5-year age cohorts shows a lower proportion of the youngest children and adults between 18 and 39 and a higher proportion of older children (6 to 17) and adults between the ages of 40 and 65 living in the rural part of the County as compared to the City of Lincoln.

The small towns in Lancaster County have a mixed history of growth. Some of the smallest towns have seen declines since 1990, while others have seen increases. Waverly, Hickman, and Bennet,

the three largest towns in the County (other than Lincoln), experienced the sharpest growth between 1990 and 2010 with 75%, 53%, and 32% growth, respectively.

Lancaster County is dominated by the City of Lincoln, which is a City of approximately 280,000 and is the capital of Nebraska and home to the flagship campus of the University of Nebraska. The other small towns in Lancaster County developed along rail corridors at 7 mile spacing, which was typical for the distance a steam train could travel before requiring additional water. Typically, in counties dominated by a larger City, you would see the small towns growing and becoming suburbs of the larger City until their margins were indistinguishable to those driving through. Lincoln, however, while it has annexed surrounding small towns as it grew, has not sprawled out significantly into the rural land between its fringes and the other small towns. As such, these towns have maintained both a physical separation from Lincoln and a unique identity, and the County includes 13 very distinct communities.



County Map

The County is home to a very unique ecological community as well, the Eastern Saline Wetlands, which exist only in Lancaster County and Saunders County to the north.

In addition, Lancaster County has significant tracts of virgin tall-grass prairie and an effort is being made to preserve a particularly valuable corridor from Lincoln, through the village of Denton, to Nebraska Audubon's Spring Creek Prairie. There are several bicycle and pedestrian trails built along old railroad right of way that branch out from Lincoln and into the surrounding rural areas.

Community assets will vary from town to town, however all towns are at least 100 years old, most include at least one church, a post office, and other businesses such as grain elevators, restaurants, vehicle services, personal services, banks, and others. Two of the towns, Hickman and Waverly, include a wider variety of businesses, full time municipal offices, and employment opportunities. These two towns have also seen significant growth over the past two decades.

While Lincoln can be viewed as an asset to other small towns, it is also a challenge. Because of the increased mobility of today's residents, compared to those 100 years ago when many of these towns were new, the small town no longer plays the same role it once did in the daily lives of its residents. These towns are at most 20 minutes from Lincoln's City limits and have become "bedroom" communities for many of their residents. In addition, consolidation of school districts, first seen in the 1970s, has moved the local school out of all but a few of the communities. The City of Lincoln is served by Lincoln Public Schools while there are nine other school districts serving the rural parts of the County. The combination of having the majority of jobs and services located in Lincoln, and the children attending school in some other town or rural consolidated school, has removed that central role the town once had. Children no longer walk to school, residents work in another place, and many must drive 30 miles, round trip, in order to buy even a gallon of milk.

While there is still growth in these towns, many of the towns complain that it is increasingly difficult to engage their residents in the business of their community. Residents seem to be interested only in their immediate surroundings, their neighbors, and don't often patronize local businesses. Downtowns are becoming increasingly run-down and the towns are losing their "spark". While many of these towns once had annual festivals that drew people from all over the region, many of them now cannot get enough residents interested in participating in their organization to be able to conduct these festivals. The towns could all benefit from a redefinition of their unique identity and engagement of their population in the day-to-day life of the town.

Most of the towns show steady population and several of them have shown significant growth over the past few decades. In general, the percentage of growth in the small town population is greater than the percentage of growth in the unincorporated areas. There appears to be strong interest in small town life. If the towns are to continue to function sustainably, they must build their capacity to serve the needs of their residents. Since the vast majority of these communities operate almost entirely on the volunteer service of their residents (to serve as village board members, planning commissioners, and members of other boards such as park and community center boards) there must be a stronger bond between the residents and a desire to participate in their communities.

One way to build this bond is to make the appearance of the community itself attractive, important, and a source of pride to its citizens. There is great opportunity to build on the particular assets of the individual communities through the use of design and to foster this community pride. The 2008 Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey, mentioned in the UNL Extension's discussion of previous collaborative efforts, identified 571 properties in the rural area of Lancaster County with historic integrity which would be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Of those, 193 are located within the incorporated small towns in Lancaster County. There is opportunity for those communities to consider these properties as amenities that may have further value to the community as a whole.

Town centers are often run down and underutilized. In many cases older buildings have been retrofitted in ways that hide their particular design characters—cladding placed over old brick, a sign covering up design features on the facade, HVAC equipment placed in a position visible from the street. In some cases parks have aged equipment that is unattractive to children and families and possibly even dangerous. Sidewalks are discontinuous, broken, and sometimes missing entirely.



**Downtown Raymond**



**Davey Playground**

Street trees are aging, uncared for, and not replaced when they must be removed. Older housing, which often has a charming architectural character, is sometimes in ill repair with overgrown vegetation surrounding it, and goes unnoticed and unappreciated by those living in the community.

Finances are also a major challenge for most of the towns. Property taxes are the main source of municipal revenue and the majority of those taxes are used to maintain and improve utility services, primarily water and wastewater, and maintaining roads. A few of the towns have privately funded foundations or booster clubs, some of them have fees collected from the use of practice fields or community halls, and a few have keno revenues. Information on how to kick off large projects with smaller, less expensive, demonstration projects would serve the communities well as would information on funding sources or fund raising techniques.

There is continued interest by much of the County population in residing in these small towns. The towns are often considered to be friendly, safe, family-oriented communities; however, once new residents arrive they may not find making a real connection with their new community to be as simple as they thought it would be. Attractive public spaces that invite new and long-time residents to engage with others in their community could foster connections to that community that will increase participation in the day-to-day life of the town. Young people who grow up in a community with such connections are more likely to participate in their community whether they stay in that town or move on to another. Unified design themes or particular design characteristics could also foster commercial investments in these towns.

Many of the towns have vacant store fronts, underutilized commercial space, or gaps in their commercial districts. With proximity to Lincoln and the capacity of many businesses to function through the internet, there is opportunity for the towns to benefit from the relocation of businesses to their downtowns. These small town commercial districts are also ideal for those who might be looking to begin a new business. The University of Nebraska Center for Entrepreneurship and the Southeast Community College Entrepreneurial Center are both active programs to develop entrepreneurs in the region. Lincoln has been successful in the last several years in attracting both entrepreneurs and investors in these ventures. Invest Nebraska, a statewide entrepreneurial organization, states that Nebraska as a whole attracted more out-of-state investment in entrepreneurial enterprises in 2013 than in the previous 5 years combined. It is reasonable to believe there are entrepreneurs in the region who would find a small town setting, available space at reasonable rates, a personal experience with the local governing authorities all located just minutes from Lincoln, attractive. Lancaster County has a long standing and formal policy of directing commercial and industrial development to the cities and villages rather than the rural area, which allows them to benefit from the property and sales taxes generated by these businesses.

The migratory pattern called “rural flight” occurs in a region following the industrialization of agriculture. This trend has been evident in the US since World War II with the spread of industrialized agriculture. Small family farms gave way to specialized large farms. The loss of population in rural areas leads to the abandonment of small towns as the rural customers of retail and service businesses move to larger communities. Those who do stay are no longer as likely to find employment in the town as these businesses close, and so must commute to larger communities. These lead to many of the issues noted previously in this application: lack of involved and committed community members, empty storefronts, and a general decline of public spaces. This is certainly not confined to Lancaster County, Nebraska, but has likely been experienced in communities all over the US, and probably beyond, as rural populations decline.

However, in situations where there are larger communities near enough to provide employment with reasonable commute times, there is opportunity for savvy rural communities to benefit from the unique lifestyle a small town can offer. In Lancaster County, the presence of the City of Lincoln provides such an opportunity. I doubt this is unique in the US, either. Indeed, Lancaster County has seen the population of its small towns increase at a rate greater than the overall population of the County. However, anecdotal comment from the towns themselves indicates many of these residents are not fully engaged in their community. If these communities can tap into the desire that many express for “small town” lifestyle for themselves and their families, they may be able to increase their populations not only in number but also in dedication to their communities.

The planning of this workshop could provide a sort of template that could be applied to communities with similar conditions. If a sort of toolbox can be compiled with ideas and techniques that could be tailored to a particular community this could be a powerful resource for struggling communities.



# Citizens' Institute on Rural Design

## About CIRD

Residents in America's small towns and rural communities care deeply about the future of their towns and value their uniqueness, strong sense of community, and special places. However, they increasingly face urgent challenges: How can they add jobs and support local businesses? How do they create a positive future for their kids? How can they honor and protect local character and history? How do they use limited financial, human, and natural resources wisely?

Developing locally-driven solutions to these challenges is critical to the long-term vitality of these communities, and the arts and design can play a powerful role in this process. Across the country, community leaders and residents are coming together to tackle these challenges and to find creative strategies that address:

- How to build strong economies and grow jobs;
- Where to locate new growth or redevelop older areas;
- How to design efficient transportation systems;
- How to protect the community's historic and culturally significant resources.

[Rural design](#) is an important tool for rural communities to build upon existing assets and improve the way a community looks, its quality of life, and its economic viability. However, few rural communities have access to design assistance or the expertise to tackle these challenges on their own.

The Citizens' Institute on Rural Design™ (CIRD) provides communities access to the resources they need to convert their own good ideas into reality. CIRD works with communities with populations of 50,000 or less, and offers annual competitive funding to as many as four small towns or rural communities to host a two-and-a-half day community design workshop. With support from a wide range of design, planning and creative placemaking professionals, the workshops bring together local leaders from non-profits, community organizations, and government to develop actionable solutions to the community's pressing design challenges. The community receives additional support through webinars, conference calls, and web-based [resources](#).

Established in 1991 as Your Town: the Citizens' Institute on Rural Design™, CIRD has convened more than 70 [workshops](#) in all regions of the country, empowering residents to leverage local assets for the future in order to build better places to live, work, and play. Initially a partnership among the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and the State University of New York (SUNY) at Syracuse, the program was managed by Richard Hawks and Shelley Mastran from 1991-2012.

CIRD remains one of the NEA's key [design leadership initiatives](#), and is currently conducted in partnership with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Project for Public Spaces, Inc., along with the Orton Family Foundation and CommunityMatters® Partnership.

## Program Goals

The CIRDP program offers rural communities the following:

- An annual competitive opportunity to host an intensive, two-and-a-half day design workshop, supported through a \$7,000 stipend and in-kind technical assistance and design expertise valued at \$35,000.
- Capacity building conference calls and webinars on key rural design and planning topics.
- Web-based access to a wide range of rural design resources.

Through these three primary components, the program seeks to:

- Raise awareness about the role of design in enhancing the quality of life and economic vitality of rural communities and to spur innovative design solutions.
- Empower citizens to play a role in guiding and determining appropriate development for their communities, including best use of available federal and state funding.
- Equip participants with the tools and techniques to identify, value, protect, and enhance the unique aspects of their towns and landscapes.
- Strengthen the work and the partnerships of individuals and organizations who are already providing assistance to rural areas on design and community development issues.
- Provide a forum for rural technical assistance providers to share their professional skills, learn new techniques that would aid them in their work with rural communities, and exchange ideas and experiences with rural communities and other providers.
- Provide participants with access to best practice approaches to place-based architecture, landscape architecture, heritage tourism, cultural development, arts-based civic engagement, historic preservation, and land management.
- Contribute to the creation of a community of practice for rural design.

## Partners

The Citizens' Institute on Rural Design™ (CIRD) is a leadership initiative of the National Endowment for the Arts conducted in partnership with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Project for Public Spaces, Inc., along with the Orton Family Foundation and CommunityMatters® Partnership.

**National Endowment for the Arts** ([www.arts.gov](http://www.arts.gov))



The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) funds and oversees the CIRDP program. The NEA was established by Congress in 1965 as an independent agency of the federal government. To date, the NEA has awarded more than \$4 billion to support artistic excellence, creativity, and innovation for the benefit of individuals and communities. The NEA extends its work through partnerships with state arts agencies, local leaders, other federal agencies, and the philanthropic sector.

**U.S. Department of Agriculture** ([www.rurdev.usda.gov](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov))



The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will use its Rural Development network across the country to increase the number and quality of applications to the CIRDC program and to serve on panels to select communities for workshops. USDA Rural Development administers and manages housing, business and community infrastructure programs through a national network of state and local offices. Rural Development has an active portfolio of more than \$176 billion in loans and loan guarantees. These programs are designed to improve the economic stability of rural communities, businesses, residents, farmers and ranchers and improve the quality of life in rural America.

**Project for Public Spaces** ([www.pps.org](http://www.pps.org))



Project for Public Spaces (PPS) serves as the lead cooperator for CIRDC, administering and coordinating the program on behalf of the NEA. Founded in 1975, PPS is a nonprofit planning, design, and educational organization dedicated to helping people create and sustain public spaces that build stronger communities. PPS has completed projects in over 2,500 communities and all 50 US states, and has become an internationally recognized center for resources, tools, and inspiration about placemaking.

**Orton Family Foundation** ([www.orton.org](http://www.orton.org))



ORTON FAMILY  
FOUNDATION

The Orton Family Foundation is the lead partner for CIRDC, assisting with key aspects of the program including development of the workshops, conference call and webinar series, and public engagement components. Orton, founded in 1995, helps small cities and towns harness the inherent ability of citizens to imagine and achieve a culturally and economically vibrant future for their community. The Foundation's Heart & Soul approach supports citizens in steering their town's future by discovering the characteristics and attributes valued most in their communities and, then, by placing those shared values at the center of local decision making.

**CommunityMatters** ([www.communitymatters.org](http://www.communitymatters.org))



The CommunityMatters® Partnership will bring the resources and expertise of seven national non-profit organizations to CIRDC and will host the conference call and webinar series. Initiated by the Orton Family Foundation, CommunityMatters is a network of programs and experts working to build stronger civic infrastructure in communities and to support community development nationwide. In addition to PPS and Orton, CommunityMatters members include the Deliberative Democracy Consortium, Grassroots Grantmakers, New America Foundation, National Coalition for Dialogue & Deliberation, and Strong Towns.



# Workshop Goals

## Goal 1

The participants will identify what they feel are the unique characteristics and challenges of their community. This could be done through a photographic survey of their community where they are given cameras ahead of the workshop and asked to take a certain number of pictures of what they like about their town, and what they don't like. The pictures could be developed before the conference and available in hard copy format so that an exercise could be conducted to work in groups using the photos to identify strengths and weaknesses. Through guided discussion they could talk about design principles that might be used in their community to strengthen the positives and address the negatives. This would require some up front "education" on basic design principles and how design can be used to highlight assets.

## Goal 2

The participants will have an understanding of the tools available to them and how those tools can be used to meet the goals set above. The participating towns all have Comprehensive Plans, Zoning Ordinances, and Subdivision Ordinances. However, some of these documents have not been updated for decades. Most of the towns do not have full time staff that is fluent in those documents, however. In many cases there are no requests for zoning or subdivision action for years at a time. When the requests do come in, the planning commissions and boards are challenged to be able to deal with the applications simply because they have little experience and understanding of their processes.

## Goal 3

The participants will become familiar with techniques such as the Low Risk, High Return strategies used in the Neighborhoods First project for Brainerd, Minnesota, and the Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper methods proposed by the Project for Public Spaces and other similar projects. The budgets are limited for small communities, so limited that in some cases meeting the most basic needs of the community is a challenge. This would allow them to have some immediate success, with small investment, that could bolster enthusiasm for future projects. This could also help to create interest from other community members not previously engaged and help accomplish Goal 4.

## Goal 4

The participants themselves will become more excited and invested in their communities and will gain skills in passing that enthusiasm along to others in their community. This may happen naturally through the above three goals, but it is important that the participants are conscious of the need to keep involving more residents in the process. Also important is the involvement of participants of all different ages. Young people who participate in their community develop a sense of civic responsibility and tend to have lifelong interest in community issues.

## Goal 5

The participants will all know where to look for further resources, both informational and financial. It would be helpful for the participants to have some input from local organizations that work with rural communities and to be aware of other learning opportunities might be available and what opportunities for grants and other funding might be available. Some discussion of fundraising techniques would be helpful as well. If there are opportunities for communities with similar goals to collaborate on planning or grant applications, it would be great to foster those relationships.

## Goal 6

Each participating community will return to their community not only with what they have all learned together, but also with an idea, proposal, goal, etc. that is specifically tailored to their community – a tool box, so to speak. It is important that the participants are able to apply all of the discussion above to their particular circumstances, assets, and challenges. Each community should have a clear vision of what the next step is for their town.

# Workshop Agenda

March 19 – 21, 2015

## Thursday, March 19

Jackie Gaughan Multicultural Center, Second Floor, Unity Room  
University of Nebraska City Campus, 1505 S Street, Lincoln, NE

Park in Larsen Building Garage at 14<sup>th</sup> and Q Street, metered on-street parking (free after 6 pm), limited handicap parking north of building on S Street.

5:30 PM **Secrets of Successful Communities**

**ED MCMAHON - Urban Land Institute**

Ed McMahon, Senior Fellow at the Urban Land Institute, will share his enthusiasm for community engagement in the planning process, the dollars and sense of preserving community character and the importance of a community's history and stories. He will set out the "secrets of successful communities" and will provide examples of how communities can grow while also preserving what they love.

6:30 PM **Welcome** – Workshop participants adjourn to Heritage Room, UNL Student Union

**ROMA AMUNDSEN - Chairperson, Lancaster County Board of Commissioners**

**SARA HARTZELL - Lancaster County Planner**

Welcome, introductions, and a brief overview of what to expect throughout the workshop.

6:45 PM **Dinner**

7:15 PM **My Town Introductions**

Each town will give a 5-minute presentation introducing their town and sharing the goals they identified for discussion at this workshop

## Friday, March 20

Lancaster County Extension Offices  
444 Cherry Creek Rd, Lincoln, NE

Park in lot east and south of building

8:00 AM **Breakfast and Check-in**

8:15 AM **Welcome**

Welcome and a chance for attendees to ask questions.

8:30 AM **SOAR Session**

**Lincoln-Lancaster County Planning Department Staff**

**University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension Staff**

Towns will brainstorm their Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, and Results (SOAR).

9:55 AM **Break**

10:00 AM **Learning Carousel**

Participants will be divided into groups to attend three 45-minute presentations.

**A Community Planning**

**BRANDON GARRETT - Lincoln-Lancaster County Planning Department**

**PAUL BARNES - Lincoln-Lancaster County Planning Department**

Learn the basics of community planning including comprehensive plans, zoning and subdivision regulations, and design standards.

**B Public Engagement**

**MILAN WALL - Heartland Center for Leadership Development**

Learn about engaging the members of your community and how to get them involved.

**C Placemaking**

**CYNTHIA NIKITIN - Project for Public Spaces**

Learn about placemaking as an approach to community revitalization.

12:30 PM **15-minute Break**

## Friday, March 20 (continued)

- 12:45 PM **Lunch and Listen - Nebraska Success Stories**  
SHIRLEY NIEMEYER - Ashland Steering Committee  
DOUG FRIEDLI - Nebraska City Community Foundation  
DORIS OURECKY - Nebraska Czechs of Wilber  
Speakers from 3 Nebraska towns will share the success they have experienced identifying and strengthening their community's unique sense of identity through history, the arts, cultural celebrations, and intensive public engagement.
- 2:00 PM **Collaboration**  
DAVID NELSON - Project for Public Spaces  
Discuss possible opportunities for Lancaster County towns to form collaborative partnerships and share their resources.
- 2:30 PM **Break**
- 2:35 PM **Economic Development**  
DON MACKE - Center for Rural Entrepreneurship  
MIKE FEEKEN - St. Paul Development Corporation  
GREG PTACEK - Neligh Economic Development Corporation  
Economic development strategies for improving small towns.
- 3:50 PM **Public & Private Resources**  
DEBORAH DRBAL - USDA Rural Development  
KRISTA METTSCHER - USDA Rural Development  
DAVE TALADAY - SE Nebraska Development District  
GRETA LEACH - Nebraska Community Foundation  
Learn about technical and funding tools and resources available from governmental and private sources.
- 5:15 PM **My Town Discussion**  
Towns will come together in small groups to share their initial reactions to the day's sessions and generate responses to three key questions.
- 5:45 PM **Break for the Day**

## Saturday, March 21

Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center, Education Center  
11700 Southwest 100th Street, Denton, NE

Parking in gravel lot west of building

- 8:30 AM **Breakfast and Check-in**
- 8:45 AM **Welcome**  
Welcome and a chance for attendees to ask questions.
- 9:00 AM **Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper**  
CYNTHIA NIKITIN - Project for Public Spaces  
Learn low cost, low risk, high impact interventions for improving your community.
- 10:00 AM **Leadership Development**  
MILAN WALL - Heartland Center for Leadership Development  
Learn how to develop a public involvement strategy and identify and develop leaders in your community.
- 11:00 AM **My Town Working Sessions**  
Towns will work with facilitators through a 5 step process to begin development of Community Priorities, analyzed according to SOAR principals, looking at partnership and resource possibilities, likely locations, and community outreach activities.
- 12:00 PM **Working Lunch**  
Towns will prepare materials for a poster presentation where they will share their thoughts on next steps for their community.
- 1:00 PM **Poster Presentation & Wrap-Up**  
The public is invited to join the workshop for a presentation of the results.
- 2:00 PM **Adjourn**

## Public Outreach

The public outreach effort involved the use of multiple media sources as well as direct contact. Early in the application process, each of the small towns in Lancaster County was contacted by email and regular mail to gauge the level of interest in participating in the project. Seven towns responded to this initial request for consideration and staff from Planning visited those towns to introduce the concept for the workshop and request the town's support. Five of those towns supported the application by sending letters of support which accompanied the application materials.

After the announcement of the Citizens' Institute on Rural Design award was announced, a press release was made with the announcement and emails were sent to all of the village and city clerks, as well as to the core resource team members; Lancaster County Board of Commissioners and Lancaster County Extension Office of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

A list of key contacts was developed to include clerks, key agencies with rural concerns, academic institutions, public schools, religious institutions, and non-profits. Contacts were encouraged to include information in newsletters, bulletins, and on websites. Contacts were also encouraged to suggest additional contacts and to share any information in which they thought others may have an interest.

Planning developed a web page ([www.lincoln.ne.gov/city/plan/mytown](http://www.lincoln.ne.gov/city/plan/mytown)) and Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/mytownlancaster](http://www.facebook.com/mytownlancaster)) to use for electronic communication. Extensive email lists were used to get information out to the general public.

During the planning phase of the project, direct contact was made with 11 of the 12 small towns, with only Raymond declining to respond in any way. Davey invited Planning to attend a meeting to discuss their participation, but did not commit. Post cards were sent to every residence in Davey, asking for people to participate, but none responded, so Davey did not move forward with the process. Roca and Sprague also invited Planning to attend board meetings and did not commit. Postcards were sent to residents of Roca, but Sprague declined that option. Neither ended up having representation at the workshop. Additionally, Malcolm was not represented after their sole volunteer had to withdraw due to personal circumstances. A total of 7 towns were represented at the workshop.

Four press releases were made to a large list of media contacts. Several articles were published in local papers and on electronic news publications. The project was also included in at least three newsletters.



# Workshop Summary

The workshop was held over the period of three consecutive days. Day one included a public presentation by Ed McMahon, Senior Fellow for Sustainable Development, of the Urban Land Institute. McMahon gave a very well-received presentation on the importance of design in all places and encouraged the rural towns of the county to find what makes their community special and capitalize on it. Workshop participants gathered for a meal afterwards and then spent some time introducing themselves and their towns, sharing stories of what makes them special and what they are currently doing in their towns.



**Ed McMahon's Presentation**

Day two began with small group work to help identify the Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations and Results (SOAR) for each of the towns. Towns worked with facilitators and recorders to catalog ideas and build a list of items. The towns gathered together to share their SOAR results. Many were surprised to find they had a lot in common with one another.



**Town Introductions**

Several of the communities noted challenges with developing new leadership in the community. Some of them have difficulty recruiting people to run for councils or to serve on appointed boards. Some of them have a difficult time getting enough volunteers to share the workload on special projects and festivals. Trails were discussed by most of the towns. Many of them have begun to develop a trail network within their corporate limits and some have put thought into how they might connect to surrounding points, such as state recreation areas, schools, and other towns. Several towns were interested in developing a brand, signage to attract visitors, and developing marketing plans for their town. Several of them noted that they would like to have a more defined "center" of their community – a place people could point out to visitors and where everyone gathered, formally and informally.



**SOAR Session**



**Comprehensive Plans**



**Public Engagement**



**Placemaking**

Following the SOAR activity, participants were broken into three groups and rotated through three different sessions. This allowed for smaller session size and increased participation in discussion. The sessions were presented by Resource Team members: Brandon Garrett, Lincoln and Lancaster County Planning Department, Comprehensive Plans and Zoning a presentation outlining the basics of comprehensive planning and how zoning and subdivision can be used as tools to accomplish plan goals; Milan Wall, Heartland Center for Leadership Development, Public Engagement discussed the need for public participation in community development and described several techniques; and Cynthia Nikitin, Project for Public Spaces, Placemaking and the Power of Ten which gave real examples of techniques for bringing life to public spaces. Each participant was able to attend each of the presentations.

These small sessions were followed by presentations from three different communities which were given while the participants ate lunch. Shirley Niemeyer shared the story of Ashland and the Entrepreneurial Community Activation Process (ECAP) that city has been involved with. This process involved a high degree of community participation in development of community development goals for Ashland's future. Doug Friedli shared a little about Nebraska City and how that town has used its history as a community development asset and built a network of museums, art galleries, and other attractions that bring many visitors to Nebraska City each year. Doris Ourecky of Wilber shared her involvement with the Nebraska Czechs of Wilber and the annual Czech Festival. Doris encouraged other towns to find their niche, what makes them special, and then use that to create a unique identity.

After Lunch, David Nelson of Project for Public spaces spent some time discussing the opportunity for these small towns to work together to make one another stronger. Each town has assets that are different from those surrounding them. David encouraged towns to form partnerships and use their assets to complement one another, forming a wider network of opportunity.

The afternoon presentations included a panel on economic development in small communities and one on public and private resources. The economic development panel included a presentation by Don Macke of the Rural Futures Institute who demonstrated, using Firth as an example, the opportunity for economic development that already exists in these towns. He also shared some stories from around the country of towns that have experienced positive growth over the past several years. Don Macke was followed by Mike Feeken and Greg Ptacek of St. Paul and O'Neil, Nebraska, respectively. These two small communities have experienced growth in their economic base due partly to use of local sales tax, but also through the concentrated efforts of the towns to create a positive economic atmosphere to attract residents and businesses. The Public and Private Resources discussion included a presentation from the US Department of Agriculture on a wide range of programs and resources that are available to rural communities and individuals. David Taladay from the Southeast Nebraska Development District shared the mission and services of that group as well as a discussion on various services provided by the Nebraska Department of Economic Development. Finally, Greta Leach of the Nebraska Community Foundation gave an inspiring presentation reminding each town that they are rich and thriving communities and that there are resources already in these communities to move forward with whatever projects they identified.



**Doris Ourecky of Wilber**



**Don Macke's Presentation**



**David Taladay from SENDD**



**Work Session**

The third day was held at beautiful Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center, and Nebraska Audubon facility on an 800+ acre prairie in southwestern Lancaster County. Participants shared breakfast and then were given two additional presentations. Cynthia Nikitin of Project for Public Spaces provided information and inspiring photographs of the Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper program promoted by PPS. Milan Wall of the Heartland Institute for Leadership Development discussed how to identify and develop new leaders in the community and the importance recruiting promising individuals. Participants then spent the remainder of the day developing Community Priorities. The results of these discussions, along with the results of the SOAR sessions from Day 2, are in the individual chapters of this report. Participants shared their results with one another, and invited the public to join the discussion, in an hour long poster presentation at the end of the day. When the workshop ended, spirits were high, and everyone was ready to get to work!



**Work Session**



**Open House**

# Countywide Outcomes

The individual towns developed their own Community Priorities, but it was apparent, through conversations, that there were some items identified that should become Countywide Priorities. The CIRD Resource Team would like to suggest the following Countywide Priorities:

## 1. Develop a Countywide Events Calendar

Many of the towns hold events throughout the year: community festivals, garage sales, dinners, parades, fireworks displays, etc... A few of the towns discussed the possibility of cooperating on some of those events in order to support one another and to expand. A Countywide Event Calendar would allow any resident of the County to see what was going on and plan their personal schedules, but it would also allow the towns to make sure they don't conflict in their scheduling and to look for opportunities to cooperate.

## 2. Lancaster County Leadership Academy

One of the most common issues the towns had was the difficulty in identifying and recruiting new leadership. A leadership academy would allow each town, through a partnership, to identify a predetermined number of participants each year who could then go through a leadership academy program that would provide information, skills and training to participants to help them develop leadership abilities that will prepare them for public service. This could first be funded through grants but later become a partnership where each town paid an annual fee based on population or other criteria.

## 3. Lancaster County Roundtable

A group of representatives from the small towns in Lancaster County to meet on a monthly or quarterly basis. This group could discuss possible partnerships for specific events, sharing of resources, cooperative applications for grant funding, and other topics. This group could also request information from County and State government resources or private non-profit groups and have presentations at these meetings. The group could review requests for inclusion of events on the Countywide Calendar.

## 4. Lancaster County Trails

There was a considerable amount of discussion about trails in the County. Many of the towns have started trail development projects in their own towns, and many would like to extend their trail out beyond their municipal boundaries and link to other towns and places such as schools, State recreation facilities and existing and planned County trails.



# Town Outcomes

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Hallam..... 35  
Hickman..... 38  
Panama ..... 40  
Waverly ..... 43

# Bennet

## SOAR SESSION RESULTS

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### *Strengths:*

Bennet has a lot of young families that are beginning to get involved in the business of the village. They are participating in town leadership and taking interest in and ownership of the village. Bennet's location on Highway 2 and just a few miles outside of Lincoln makes it an ideal location for those who would like a small town experience. Bennet has seen lots of new residents over the past ten years and now has 700 mail customers. There are active businesses in town, including a new factory to the north. Bennet does act as a bedroom community for Lincoln but there is opportunity for new service type businesses. Bennet has a nice, active park in the center of town which hosts a farmer's market during the season. Bennet has fire and emergency services in town provided by a group of dedicated volunteers.

There are many different community organizations active in Bennet, including the Bennet Area Community Foundation, Community Builders Association, American Legion, Auxiliary and Sons of the American Legion, Girl Scouts, 4H, Baseball program, Elementary School Boosters, and churches with various circles.



**Bennet SOAR Session**

### *Opportunities:*

The village owns sufficient land in the area of the ball park and a new ball field is possible. They would like to promote and make more visible the existing city park. They would also like to have a nature centered park and a trails system. Bennet has less expensive housing than many locations. There is room surrounding Bennet for additional housing development. The town is attractive to many who grew up in small towns because of the atmosphere and the fact that they still have an elementary school in town. Bennet would very much like to retain that elementary school. There is a question about just where the village center is? There is the old village center one block west of the main street, but much of that area has been taken over by industrial uses. Bennet has an opportunity to capitalize on some small redevelopment projects and to envision what it might mean to bring that active center back. As it is now there is nowhere in town to take people to a restaurant, coffee, or shopping. There is an opportunity to take advantage of some of the history of Bennet and to celebrate that history. There are still many older residents in town that could share their memories and thoughts on what to preserve and emphasize. The community has begun this process with the addition of a mural celebrating the original fire station in town. With the aging of the Legion members there is an opportunity to reconsider what a community center might look like and what services it might provide.

### *Aspirations:*

Bennet would like to see a revival of the downtown area to include things like a coffee shop, restaurant, and some basic services. Village wide Wi-Fi and other information technology infrastructure could attract businesses back into the downtown area. A community center that could provide village offices, a small business incubator, wellness center and multi-purpose space would be welcome. Community activities such as a Harvest Festival and summer Saturday night movies in

the park are traditions that could be revived to involve more people and create a sense of community. Bennet would also like to be known as a healthy community with an active trails system and wellness center. They would like to make sure there is housing for all ages and income levels, perhaps through working with the housing authority. They would also like to see public schools return to the village.

*Results:*

Bennet believes a more robust Celebrate Bennet event calendar can be developed to increase a sense of community. The celebration of the history of Bennet can be used to develop a multi-generational sense of pride and investment to preserve and promote the community. Bennet also wants to use the space in the community to build a town center and gathering place for community events while also promoting health and wellness by creating trails, parks and a wellness center.

**COMMUNITY PRIORITIES**

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The Bennet Team was not able to attend the Saturday event, so no Community Priorities were identified.

# Denton

## SOAR SESSION RESULTS

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### *Strengths:*

Denton counts among its strengths several community organizations, including two active churches, an American Legion club, Historical Society, and Senior Diners group. Denton has a newsletter called “Town Talk” which is used to get news out to residents. It is close enough to Lincoln that some from the southwest neighborhoods frequent Denton businesses. Denton has infrastructure, including streets, lagoons, wells, sidewalks, parks, and a community center that are all in very good repair. This was all done with wisely used Keno money. Denton is small enough that it doesn’t take the City leaders long to respond to needs.



**Denton SOAR Session**

### *Opportunities:*

There is quite a bit of land in Denton that is open for development, both newly platted and older vacant lots. The infrastructure is already in place in those areas and they are ready to be built upon. Denton ball fields are also in good shape and could be used by neighboring communities. The Keno money the town gathers provides great opportunities for community improvements and programs, but these need to be planned for more carefully.

### *Aspirations:*

Denton would like to see more of the business owners actually living in the community. They would also like to see the population grow. This would have the added benefit of making the infrastructure operate more cost effectively. There are some challenges to growth in that the owners of surrounding property have not, to date, been cooperative. There are also some topographical challenges to bringing more area into the service limits. The Denton Historical Society is very active and they would like to have a physical presence in the form of a museum and office building in town.

### *Results:*

Denton feels this could result in a more stable operating budget for the town and would increase the number of residents that are actively engaged in the life of the village.

## COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

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The Denton team identified two Community Priorities: Historical Society Building and Develop a clear vision for Denton to build momentum for successful projects.

### *Historical Society Building*

The Denton Historical Society is very active in the community, but currently has no permanent home. The Historical Society and Denton leaders can take advantage of the ability of a smaller community to take action quickly when a location has been determined. The excellent infrastructure in place will be helpful when that location is determined. There are also some vacant lots that could be considered for the location of the building. Denton could also take advantage of the Prairie Corridor project currently underway through the City of Lincoln and the Lower Platte South NRD efforts. There

may be an opportunity to link the two projects together to emphasize the history of small communities such as Denton in the development of the prairie. Denton hopes that by building a home for the Historical Society they might beautify the village and energize the community.

The Denton team had an idea for a Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper event to kick off the Historical Society building project. They would like to have a summer time, outdoor screening of the movie “My Antonia” on a vacant lot they have identified as a possible site for the building. This movie was filmed in part near Denton. This could be accompanied by other events and activities in a daylong event. The team would also like to work on fund-raising for the building, including grants, and an endowment for maintenance. They would like to seek out professional design assistance and cost estimates, preferably pro-bono services. They also need to check with the village and see what the requirements for the building would be. There is potential to work with other communities to see what has worked for them.

#### *Develop a Clear Vision for Denton to Build Momentum for Successful Projects*

A process for visioning for Denton’s future is one of the first steps that should be taken. Denton is a nimble community with the ability to work quickly to make decisions. However, if there is no clear vision for direction for the village, these actions can sometimes lack focus and perhaps not take full advantage of opportunities. An updated comprehensive plan would give guidance for directing resources in the future. Denton can take care of its enviable infrastructure and can use that as a marketing tool in attracting businesses and residents. Denton should also spend some time considering how they might capitalize on the investments being made in the Prairie Corridor project and how they might capitalize on those. Denton would like for a visioning process to result in more active participation by citizens.

The Denton team feels it is important to foster new leadership in the community. Some activities to cultivate local leadership potential would be desirable. The Historical Society would be a strong partner in any visioning exercise. Visioning should lead to an updated comprehensive plan which would help to engage the citizens and could be used to prioritize funds and organize future activities. The Prairie Corridor project leaders should also be engaged during this process to make sure they know Denton is interested in participating in the planning stages.



**Denton Work Session**

# Firth

## SOAR SESSION RESULTS

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### *Strengths:*

Firth is a peaceful and safe town which is clean and conservative. There are 2 vibrant restaurants in the downtown area that do good business. The infrastructure in town has been well maintained and is in good shape. There are two active churches and a great City park. Firth has a newly revitalized Community Association and new community leadership that they hope will do new and exciting things. Firth is an AG based community, reflected in the landscape surrounding them and in the businesses in town. Firth has a strong relationship with Norris Public Schools and sees opportunities in strengthening that relationship. There is an association in town that runs and programs the ball park and has a very active calendar of youth activities.



**Firth SOAR Session**

### *Opportunities:*

There is a lot of interest in trails and Firth has developed a trails plan. The privately owned lake on the east side of town provides for some lovely views when entering from that direction or looking east from some points in town. Even new residents have a strong sense of being part of the community which may mean there is an opportunity to get more people involved. Downtown is in pretty good shape but there is some opportunity for revitalization. There is a nice row of store fronts on the north side of the downtown intersection. Downtown is also immediately adjacent to the park which might provide opportunities for some public space integrating the businesses. The old fire barn has a wall that would provide space for a nice mural. The youth of the town could be more involved in civic operations and the town would like to activate them. Prairieland Dairy is nearby and has a desire to be active in the community.

### *Aspirations:*

Firth would like to have an entrance sign which would integrate town branding. They would also like for people who attend events at Norris to know that there are two good restaurants just a couple miles away. Economic development and integration of new businesses is a priority for the town. They would like to see more housing in the mid-sized and mid-range prices. High speed internet access in town would be welcome and could assist with economic development. Firth would like to develop stronger relationships with church, community and school organizations to leverage those partnerships. Firth also would like to have a community foundation.

### *Results:*

If Firth were to realize these aspirations they believe there would be an even stronger sense of community, making it a strong town filled with strong people. Kids may be able to stay in the community and will certainly love coming home to visit if they don't. Commuters would feel like they were coming home and that they really lived in the town. There would be a strong feeling of connections between people who live in the town.

## COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

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The Firth team identified three Community Priorities: Community Sign, Trails, and Community Foundation.

### *Community Sign*

The Community Sign would take advantage of existing Strengths of the town, such as the busy restaurants, active churches, the great park and the future splash pad. There is an Opportunity in that the village owns some property near the main entrance to the business district on the north side of E. 8<sup>th</sup> Street. This could be a good location for a sign that could direct people to the core area of the town. Firth also has an Opportunity to involve some of the local youth in design and perhaps even construction. The Aspiration of making residents feel more connected to the community would be served. The Community sign would be one of the results of a larger process to develop branding for the village, including logos and other promotional materials.

Firth should collaborate with the School district to involve students from FFA and FBLA programs as well as the art classes and skills USA program. Local architects, builders and contractors could be called upon to mentor the students through this process and make it a true learning experience for them. Donations could be solicited to help pay for the sign itself.

Team members for this effort should include:

- FACET
- Fire Department
- Village Board
- Business Community

There is an opportunity here to, as a parallel activity, engage businesses from town and the surrounding area, in a conversation about a possible business association. This association could be involved in marketing Firth and in projects to enliven the downtown area. A nice kick-off and engagement activity might be a “business after hours” club where business owners could come together and socialize and get to know one another.

Initial steps:

- Revisit the topic with the Fire Department and make contacts with the local architect and students in town.
- After a concept of the sign has been developed, reach out to the businesses and the Skills USA class.

### *Trails*

Firth is very interested in further developing the Trails Plan and perhaps even extending out to Norris at some point. Being a farming community, there are lots of large land owners and those with heavy equipment that might be able to assist with construction and maintenance of trails. The local youth are also a great Strength in harnessing volunteer assets. This might encourage young people to stay in Firth, make the community feel more connected, increase activity in the town and get people out where they can meet one another. A good trail system can also provide a sense of community pride and identity.

Firth would like to collaborate with the Great Plains Trails Network to get their experienced input on how to proceed. The Village Board, FACET and the landowners involved would also be essential partners. There is an opportunity to get the entire village involved in the project, as well as those who

live on surrounding acreages. Firth may also want to reach out to surrounding towns that have also identified trails as a community priority – such as Hickman and Panama. The NRD and the railroad may also play a part in planning.

Team members for this issue should include:

It may be a good idea for a group of interested citizens to create a group with the specific mission of addressing trail needs. This group could include cycling and running enthusiasts, land owners, engineers and designers, and other who are interested. It would be wise to have some representation from the village board or planning commission on the group, but regular contact with the village could serve the same purpose.



**Firth Work Session**

Initial steps:

- Contact Great Plains Trails Network and ask them to attend a village board meeting and share some of their experience.
- Public outreach to community to find interested parties for the team: Newsletter, website, mailings, Voice newspaper, social media. Once word is out, hold a town hall meeting to gather input and find those interested in participating.

*Resource team comments: Having the school within 2 miles of the village provides an opportunity to make a trail connection that could allow residents to travel the trails in order to attend school events, and perhaps even allow students to ride their bikes to school during good weather. The grade separated roadway over the western RR tracks has a fairly wide shoulder that could be used to cross that barrier. Bollards could be installed to further separate the trail from the roadway and provide some measure of safety, or at least comfort, for the riders. Utilizing private property along the tributary to the Middle Branch of the Big Nemaha River could provide a connection that might be agreeable to landowners, and would keep bicycles away from vehicle traffic. The easiest connection to make would bring the trail to the acreages on the west side of Firth. This would serve the dual purpose of making those homeowners feel more a part of the village.*

#### **Community Foundation:**

Firth would like to establish a community foundation in order to tap into the wealth of the surrounding area. The economic information provided by Don Macke showed that there is a huge Opportunity for community investment. Many of the families in the area have a long history and may be looking for an opportunity to leave a legacy. Firth would like to take advantage of the FACET group already in place. Perhaps the Community Foundation could be an offshoot of that group. The Village Board and the Nebraska Community Foundation will be important partners.

Initial Steps:

- Joint meeting of the village board and FACET
- Invite Greta Leach of Nebraska Community Foundation to that meeting so she can explain the process for establishing a foundation.
- Find a substantial donation to start the foundation.
- Explain to community that with NCF help the funds will be professionally managed.

# Hallam

## SOAR SESSION RESULTS

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### *Strengths:*

Due to the past history of having a good portion of the town leveled by a tornado, Hallam actually has a number of ready-to-build lots in town, as well as commercial building sites available with services. Most of the property has been available for over ten years and so prices are quite reasonable. The town is in a geographically desirable location for households where the residents work in different towns as it is about equal distance between Lincoln and Beatrice and nearby Crete and Wilber as well. Hallam has two churches and an American Legion post, all of which are involved in community activities. The town itself does 3 fundraising activities per year. The park is well maintained and has newer facilities.

### *Opportunities:*

Hallam has a very large auditorium that stays busy with both community activities and private, rental functions. This could be used for more community programming. There are several commercially zoned sites in the central district which are ready for businesses and the town leaders are very business friendly. There is currently one newer business that is for sale at the main intersection. The restaurant, which has been in business for over 25 years is currently planning an expansion. There are 15 vacant residential lots in town available for purchase at a reasonable price. Hallam has an established annual event, Hallam Fest, which could provide opportunity for further activities.

### *Aspirations:*

Hallam would like to see all 15 of the available lots sold to young families. They would also like to see some opportunity for housing for older adults, perhaps near downtown so they could be near services and social centers. They would like to have an opportunity for community gardening and perhaps a farmer's market. In the future they would like to see some sort of grocery services in town. A green area where people could meet and sit would be nice, perhaps near the post office or community center. They would also like a lending library besides just the book mobile provided by Lincoln City Libraries. They would like to see some sort of downtown beautification project to bring some green back downtown and calm traffic. A trail around town for walking is part of the comprehensive plan and is a priority for the community.



**Hallam SOAR Session**

### *Results:*

Making the main street and downtown more attractive would help to attract new business and residents. It would increase civic pride and maybe get more people interested in participating in town projects. As the town grows there would hopefully be a more diverse population to keep the town going. This may also attract more development to town. There may even be a possibility to move forward with a local sales tax.

## COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

The Hallam Team developed four Community Priorities: Beautification of Main Street, Population growth – all lots full, Trails and green space, and Community involvement.

### *Beautification of Main Street*

Main Street is a continuation of 55H Spur, or West Hallam Road, and is the only entrance and exit from Hallam. As such, it is a straight shot through town which many travel at a higher than desired rate of speed. The speed limit has been lowered and electronic speed monitoring devices have been used in the past to try to slow traffic. A stop sign was installed at a central intersection. However, vehicles continue to speed through town. The down town area also has a barren feel, due in part to the empty lots, but also because of the wide expanse of paving for roadway, parking and sidewalks. A beautification project would build civic pride, may increase interest by new businesses and may inspire existing businesses to make improvements. Improvements could also increase visual interest along the route that would cause through traffic to slow. Bringing in the street edge by using bump-outs and street trees narrows the view and naturally slows traffic.

### *Population Growth – All Lots Full*

The Hallam team would like to promote the available lots in town to young families and others interested in living in a small community. This would capitalize on strengths such as the geographic desirability of the location, reasonable cost of living, infrastructure already in place, lower taxes, and other benefits. Hallam could use churches, banks, realtors, and neighborhoods to promote the available lots. They could prepare maps showing the locations of available land, and brochures promoting the town. This could result in a better tax base and could increase community involvement.



**Hallam Work Session**

### *Trails and Greenspace*

Hallam has public support for improved access to greenspace and parks and for development of a trail around the perimeter of the village. There is open space in the downtown area near the bank and post office or west of Moyer's garage. This is privately owned. There is publicly owned space adjacent to the Auditorium, but it is paved and would need to be rehabbed. There is a large space north of the elevator that is in private ownership but is vacant and in grass. Hallam would like to see the open space serve as a gathering place and public square. If there was sufficient size there could be a community garden component, and possibly farmer's market. The Hallam team would like to see a community input activity such as a "Chalk Talk" to get ideas from the community on what they would like to see. They could also use a tool such as Mind Mixer to get input. Eventually they would like to include checkers/chess boards, chalk boards and an update to the parking lot at the park.

*Resource team comments: There are a lot of ideas here that would benefit from some coordinated planning. The Resource Team would recommend undertaking a planning effort to develop a comprehensive Parks and Open Space Plan that could identify the proposed trail, greenspace/public square area in downtown, and improvements to the existing park.*

### *Community Involvement*

The Hallam team would like to increase community involvement by developing a method for dispersing information to the residents. They could take advantage of the community center as a central site for information distribution and display. They do have a fairly extensive email list of resident emails, but there are new people in town. They also have many young people in town who tend to be more social media savvy. Social Media provides an opportunity to get information out quickly and cheaply. A calendar of local events could be developed and displayed both on social media and in hard copy format at frequented sites, such as the post office, bank, restaurant, and community center. A countywide calendar on the County website would also share information among towns. Hallam's aspiration would be the establishment of a County-wide calendar, hosted on social media or the County website that would display all county community events. This could lead to economic development, increased awareness of and participation in community events, and possibly more volunteers even from other communities.

# Hickman

## SOAR SESSION RESULTS

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### Strengths:

Hickman is fortunate to have a full time staff of skilled professionals and a strong government in place. They are a quickly growing community that has had the foresight to use a planning process for that growth. They have improved and maintained city services well and have good reliable infrastructure. They have also passed a local sales tax to provide money for economic development. Hickman has a downtown district with several active businesses, including a long-standing grocery store. Construction is underway on a new community center which will include city offices and event space. Hickman is also home to a successful live theater which puts on several productions per year. Hickman is in the highly desirable Norris School District and has two large State recreation areas nearby.



**Hickman SOAR Session**

### Opportunities:

Hickman would like to expand their community celebrations to engage more residents and increase a sense of community. The Hickman Hay Day celebration, Trick-or-Treat on the Trails, 4<sup>th</sup> of July Fireworks in the Park, Animal Run and Chile Feed, Community Garage Sales, Clean Up Day, and others are community events that provide opportunities to engage citizens. There are many people in town who express interest in participating in events and leadership, they just need to be engaged and committed to those activities. They would also like to find a way to engage more of the acreage residents and farming community surrounding the town. Hickman would like to take every opportunity to seek input from citizens.

*Resource team comments: Hickman's downtown has a lot of character and provides opportunity for enhancing streetscapes and public spaces. There are some empty spaces and Hickman should work to recruit businesses to fill those spaces. Businesses that would bring foot traffic and a street presence could really enliven downtown.*

### Aspirations:

Hickman would like to have a variety of recreation and entertainment options, including an aquatics center which could tie into the Norris Swim Team, a drive in movie theater, bigger parks with soccer fields and new tennis courts, and a trail system that links to the nearby State and NRD lakes. They would also like to maintain high aesthetic standards by regulating signage, landscaping near the transformer, and taking advantage of natural resources. Hickman would like to improve pedestrian access and safety on major roadways and possibly widen 68<sup>th</sup> Street and Hickman Road as they come into town and then pass through town. Hickman would like to continue residential growth to the north of town, including apartment growth, and to market both current and new businesses. Hickman would also like to reserve an area for a future industrial park so that those uses will be kept separate from residential uses and natural resources. The involvement of young people in events and the business of the city will be important for the future.

### Results:

As a result of Hickman’s work they expect to see increased quality of life with great recreation and entertainment options, opportunities for leisure activities and healthy active children. The economy of Hickman will thrive with a strong tax base and employment opportunities in town.

## **COMMUNITY PRIORITIES**

The Hickman team identified two Community Priorities: Positive Government with Citizen Input, and Planned Growth with Aesthetic Results.

### *Positive Government with Citizen Input*

Hickman has a city council, mayor and staff that are all very approachable and understand the benefits of citizen input. They have done community surveys in the past that have given them some initial direction. Their Planning Commission is active and knowledgeable and has been involved in the updating of the Comprehensive Plan. The various community organizations in town would provide good opportunities for getting information out as well as for soliciting comments. Groups to contact include churches, Volunteer Fire Department, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Kiwanis, Boy and Girl Scouts, Norris Public Schools organizations, Neighborhoods, Hickman Foundation, and others. Hickman would also like to work with Firth and Roca as well as Lancaster County. Other important partners and resources include Prairieland Dairy, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, the Voice newspaper, 2040 Countywide Trails Plan, Waverly Comprehensive Plan.

As a first step in the process, the team recommends a “Walk, Talk, and Eat Program”. This would be a series of event open to the public that would involve various elected and appointed officials, as well as City employees, spending some time walking around a specific area, talking to any interested parties, and then having a hot dog feed, pancake breakfast, snow cone, or other small treat with the group. For instance, the Planning Commission could walk around the downtown with business owners and others, talk about what design standards are and see what the feeling is about whether or not these are appropriate. It could also involve a stop at the village offices to look at some pictures of successful communities that have used design standards, or some drawings of what various buildings might look like if design standards were applied. Some examples of appropriate groups and topics are: Planning Commission, design standards, comprehensive plan and long range plan; Mayor, pop-up conversations; City Council, contact government agencies, pop-up conversations; Parks Director, trail system, parks development, Lighter Quicker Cheaper; Public Works, safety with roads and walkways, mayor conversations; City staff, survey for citizen input; Teams, recruit volunteers from previously listed teams for their input.



**Hickman Work Session**

### *Planned Growth with Aesthetic Results*

Hickman has in place a strong comprehensive plan, zoning and subdivision ordinances, and has the staff to apply them to application requests. The Planning Commission is well trained and understands the requirements and applies them consistently in their decisions. Hickman also has several community beautification projects and policies in place, such as a nice entry sign, park improvements near the south viaduct, several dilapidated houses that have been removed from their lots, and a public tree rebate plan. Most of the properties along the entry corridor and main streets are neat and well maintained.

# Panama

## SOAR SESSION RESULTS

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### *Strengths:*

One of Panama's greatest strengths is their progressive Village Board. This board has demonstrated an ability to see the wider view while still being able to focus in on details. The board has initiated a newsletter and town hall meetings to keep the public informed and engaged. The board is also very supportive of local businesses. Panama is proud to have many locally owned and operated businesses. There is a lot going on in Panama, many projects are underway or being completely, particularly focused on young people and recreation. Panama's location adjacent to a paved roadway, but without a through street going through town, means there is a particularly low level of traffic which makes it more comfortable for children to walk and ride about town. Panama is also fortunate to have a strong local church that is growing.



**Panama SOAR Session**

### *Opportunities:*

A two story, brick building, a former public school, sits in the middle of Panama. This is a great opportunity for redevelopment, one which is currently being taken advantage of by a local family. There is discussion of making part of that building an open gymnasium area for the community. There is a large open grass area near the ball fields on the north side of town which provides an opportunity for additional playing fields. There are also some commercial buildings in the downtown that are for sale and provide opportunity for additional businesses.

### *Aspirations:*

Panama would like to see new and active businesses move into town. They would like to have a beautiful and active downtown with plenty of community activities. They would particularly like to see their new community center become a lively and exciting place that is used by the whole community. There are roads that need paving or repaving. Panama would like to have a splash pad for local children. A new entryway sign that defines the entrance to the business district would help those from out of town navigate.

### *Results:*

If Panama is able to achieve these aspirations they would see their property values rise, increasing the village income and ability to maintain and improve facilities. They would also see an improvement in the quality of life of those who live in Panama. Mostly, they would like to see children stay in Panama after graduating from school and return to Panama with their own children. Panama would like to maintain their progressive town board to continue current objectives and pursue new opportunities that will enable growth. It is also important to implement community events that will result in a higher quality of life.

## COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

The Panama team identified five Community Priorities: Maintain a progressive town board, Create a long term parks and recreation plan, Create plans for the area surrounding the Community Center, Undergo business district beautification project to increase active occupancy, and Address water infrastructure needs.

### *Progressive Town Board*

The town board has a “can do” attitude that has resulted in great strides over recent years. There is momentum to move forward on projects, increased involvement and collaboration in the town and they are able to reach agreement on issues. There is an opportunity to set the bar even higher. New skill sets would be useful on the board, and different perspectives will lead to even better results. There is an opportunity for the board to develop a process for businesses to obtain liquor licenses to increase their profitability. The team aspires to more active recruitment of board members. It will be important to identify the skills needed and then to look for those with the skills to recruit. Results will be continued action – not just talking but happening!

*Resource team comments: Don't forget to engage youth in the process. Increased involvement at a young age can lead to retention of youth, not to mention fresh ideas and energy.*

### *Create a Long Term Parks and Recreation Plan*

Panama is a very recreation focused community. There are currently spaces designated for future recreation improvements, such as improvements to the ball park, a new BMX track, possible soccer fields, etc... There is also new playground equipment that has been purchased and not yet installed. Panama has an opportunity to take advantage of other publicly owned land. The community has become more engaged in the planning process and there is an opportunity to involve them in the design and execution of projects. They would like to find some skilled individuals to help lead these projects and programs. Panama hopes that activities and programs will lead to more community involvement, as well as pride in the facilities, a sense of ownership and increased likelihood to care for those facilities. Ultimately, the hope is that increased community activity will lead to interest in increased business.



**Panama Work Session**

### *Create Plans for the Area Surrounding the Community Center*

Panama is in the process of constructing a new community center in the middle of downtown. They already have a start on the plans, as far as building location and design go. There is opportunity to look at moving a small playground to the Community Center site which would allow small children a place to play while events are taking place. There is also opportunity for Senior Center where older adults could gather for meals and socialization. The community center will also allow for income through event rentals. Panama would like to see the community center be a very active space with many community events and gatherings. They would like to develop some annual events that could become community traditions. They hope the results of this project will be a stronger community with more interpersonal interaction and enrichment.

### *Business District Beautification and Increased Active Occupancy*

There are currently 5 businesses in Panama, which proves business can exist and thrive in this community. There are available spaces for new businesses. The progressive town board is very pro-business, and the rest of the community would like to see more business as well. Panama has observed new businesses coming in to other towns, and feel that there is opportunity in Panama based on the availability of space as well as nice proximity to the highway and Lincoln. Panama would like to see vibrancy restored to the downtown area. They would also like to see some incentive developed to prompt business owners to improve existing businesses or start new ones. Overall results could be a nicer looking downtown, increased employment opportunities in town. In the long term more people would be interested in visiting Panama and possibly even relocating to the area.

#### *Address Water Infrastructure Needs*

Panama currently has two water sources and a newly renovated water tower, which are all paid off. The water system is the only utility income source. However, there is a need to do an upgrade to the full system, similar to what was done with the sewer system. Upgrading the water lines would also provide an opportunity to do some street upgrades and address some storm water run-off issues. There are some opportunities for grants to address water quality issues. Panama is concerned that people may choose to leave the village due to concerns over water quality. There is also some confusion in the town leadership because of actions (not sure what this bullet means?). Panama believes the results of improvements to the water supply could be a healthier, happier community which may be more willing to maintain the system once it is working well.

Panama sees some opportunities for collaborating with other towns on equipment. For instance, they would like to cost share on a projector that could be used for presentations and community movie nights. They would also like to get input from towns with experience in managing and programming the community center. Help with developing rental agreements and processes would be appreciated.

Panama sees businesses such as the Panama Locker as great resources and partners in events. They would also like to put in some work to identify local residents with particular skill sets to assist with projects.

# Waverly

## SOAR SESSION RESULTS

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### *Strengths:*

Waverly is fortunate to have the schools within the City limits. Children can walk to school and neighborhoods look at the school as a center. There are many community organizations such as the volunteer fire department, Kiwanis club, Chamber of Commerce, Community Foundation, Education Foundation. There are many established community events, such as an egg hunt, community breakfasts, Waverly Fest, Halloween parties, a car show, Christmas tree decorating festival, and Arbor Day celebration. Waverly has a very large park with mature trees and a ball park that is newly built. Waverly usually does not have difficulty finding people to serve on boards and run for office. The infrastructure in Waverly is well maintained and up to date. Being located near I-80 on the way to Omaha is convenient for families that have one worker based in Omaha.



**Waverly SOAR Session**

### *Opportunities:*

Waverly's young population provides opportunity for growth. The trail system Waverly has begun to develop could be linked into the City of Lincoln's Salt Creek and Steven's Creek trail system when those are developed fully. Waverly's parks offer opportunities for including entertainment in the band shell and sporting events at the new ball park. Waverly has good transportation systems with a nearby interstate interchange, major highway running through town, and a developing electric car system. Waverly is adjacent to the Camp Creek site which holds many events during the year, mostly focused on the rural heritage of Nebraska and agricultural development.

There is room for expansion around Waverly. There are also opportunities for expansion of some existing commercial and industrial districts. Consideration of gateways to the town needs to be taken in these expansion activities.

### *Aspirations:*

Waverly would like to see its population grow to about 10,000. They would like to be self-sufficient and contained with more complete services. They would like to retain young people but still make the city friendly to older residents. To accomplish this, additional housing that is affordable and accessible will be needed. So will an increased variety of jobs and services, including a one-stop shop for health care. Waverly would like to create a town center which would become the focus of community and civic activity. Those activities should include sports tournaments, Sr. centers and meeting places, farmer's markets, and an expanded Waverly Fest. Waverly would like to expand their recreational facilities to include a sports complex and indoor recreation center. New City offices and a fire station are also needed and should reflect civic pride. Waverly also wants to nurture their reputation as a green community. Transportation planning and projects should include a more "complete streets" type design with all forms of transportation being considered and included. In order to connect neighborhoods to schools and make walking to school a practical alternative, consideration should be given to pedestrian and bicycle connections, particularly across Highway 6.

Long term, Waverly wants to plan for the future development of the N 162<sup>nd</sup> Street and Interstate 80 interchange and what activities might surround it.

**Results:**

Waverly will be a hip, cool place to live and visit which will be attractive to residents and businesses.

**COMMUNITY PRIORITIES**

The Waverly Team identified four Community Priorities: Connect the town through sidewalks and trails over a new viaduct, Create a town center, Create a community identity/image, Functional Event Area.

**Connect the Town Through Sidewalks and Trails Over a New Viaduct.**

Highway 6 runs diagonally through Waverly, separating the older town center from newer commercial development and residents from schools, parks and one another. To add to this challenge, a busy railroad parallels Highway 6. There is one viaduct on the west side of town that provides a connection, primarily to the middle school and high school, however this does not include safe pedestrian and bicycle connection. The Waverly team would like to see a viaduct that better connects pedestrian and bicycle activity. They would also like to see general improvements throughout the city to make moving around on foot or by bike easier and safer. This will allow children to walk or bike to school safely, increase healthy activity in town, connecting neighborhoods and creating a feeling of one community. Waverly would like to see a pedestrian and bicycle connection over the railroad and highway. The Environmental Protection Agency should be contacted as a potential source of funding.



**Waverly SOAR Session**

Important partnerships would be the County Engineer, Railroad Transportation Safety District, the City Council, State Safe Routes to School program, Aspen neighborhood families, and the schools.

*Resource team comments: It appears the existing viaduct may be too narrow to retrofit, but that could be looked into. It may be that if the lanes were shifted to one side and bollards were used to separate traffic, a pedestrian bicycle lane on one side may be possible. A second viaduct for vehicle and pedestrian bicycle traffic may be challenging to fit into the existing city footprint, but should definitely be considered and planned for as the city expands to the east. Something to consider is a pedestrian and bicycle only viaduct in a more central location, perhaps near Heywood Drive or North 141st street. This would be a good alignment to bring people in to the future town center and the two major parks. It is also central and would give good access to schools. It is almost certain that any viaduct placed in the existing city will require the acquisition of some private property, although a pedestrian and bicycle only crossing could utilize a spiral ramp to minimize the area. Waverly might also consider reviewing the Complete Streets program*

**Create a Community Identity/Image**

Waverly would like to initiate a process to develop a community identity or “brand”. This brand would capitalize on the healthy living goals Waverly has and highlight their parks, sports, schools, active living and other green strengths. There is an opportunity to develop a brand and vision that could be

used in all sorts of marketing, signage, and to create community pride and identity. The team would like to involve the full community in this effort and could use techniques such as town hall meetings, open houses, contests online and in person, surveys, social media, etc... to engage people in the process. The brand could be incorporated into signage, documents, welcome signs, logos on city employee uniforms, stationary, websites, etc... Engaging the creative community, art classes, and young people in the process could take advantage of existing talent and increase community involvement and buy-in.

Important partners include the full community in the form of town halls and contests, the schools and young people, the UNL School of Business and Entrepreneurship programs and the creative community.

### *Create a Town Center*

Because of the rail and highway corridors that divide the town, along with the grain elevators adjacent to the old downtown and the strip development that has taken place in the newer parts of town, Waverly has developed without a distinct central business district or square. It is difficult for those from out of town to locate the “downtown” which can be a bit disorienting. The Waverly team would like to identify and appropriate town center and begin to work toward fully developing this central gathering place. The existing strip mall, which has been identified by the owner as due for an update, is on the south side of the highway and is partially visible from the highway. It is also adjacent to the more mature park and has good connectivity to existing neighborhoods. There are opportunities to add programming such as outdoor dining, festivals and performances, farmer’s markets, craft fairs, and other events. The adjacent businesses could participate and benefit in these events by providing coffee carts, booths, wine and cheese tastings, etc... If an attractive outdoor space is created this could become a welcoming place for people to come and hang out and “do their thing”. A reconfiguration and “greening” of the parking lot could create a flexible attractive place that serves as parking most of the time and can flex to provide event space. Connections via sidewalks and trails to the nearby park could expand events to include athletic competitions, larger performances, and larger shows such as car shows. Park area could also be used to provide additional parking for larger events. This could eventually free up Wayne Park for other uses and activate Lawson Park.

Important partners to engage are the mall owner and business owners in the mall and in the surrounding area, the City leaders, the Nebraska Main Street program, Local residents, and the UNL Rural Futures Initiative and College of Architecture.

### *Functional Event Area*

This priority is related to the Town Center above, but focuses more on Wayne Park to the east. The concept is to repurpose parts of the park into more multi-purpose space. The ball fields in the park have largely been replaced by the new facility in the northern part of town. Repurposing the ball field space could allow for events such as craft fairs and farmer’s markets, community garage sales, car shows, concerts, and other types of recreational activity. There are unused areas available in the park that could also be used. Wayne Park is also close to the existing mall and could be better connecting via trails and sidewalks. If properly planned this could provide for an active area for business and entertainment.

Important partners are the high school band, farmers market organizers, artist, kids, garden club (master gardeners), Nebraska Statewide Arboretum, Schools, Theater groups, dance studio, vendors (cupcakes, wine, grocery store, food trucks), tennis and basketball enthusiasts.



## Follow-Up Plans

This is only the beginning. In order to keep momentum rolling forward, Lincoln and Lancaster County Planning Department would like to suggest the following follow-up activities:

### Follow-up Meeting

Each town would be asked to provide a representative from the workshop team that could attend a follow-up meeting, lasting approximately two hours, where discussions of next steps would take place. Each town would be presented with a printed copy of this report. Each town would be asked to give a short report on what changes or activities had been taken thus far as a result of the workshop. The group would then discuss the Countywide Outcomes presented in this report and decide which if any they would move forward with.

### Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper Demonstration Project(s)

Each town will be asked to come up with an idea for a LQC project in their community that would address one of the Community Priorities identified in the workshop. The plans would be reviewed and one or more selected that could be used to demonstrate how one of these projects can be implemented. Every effort would be made to choose a high visibility project that incorporated many different design techniques so that the other towns could look at the project and get a good idea of how they could implement a similar project in their own community.



# Appendix A: CIRD Notebook



Citizens' Institute on Rural Design™  
My Town, Lancaster County Workshop  
March 19 - 21, 2015



# Citizens' Institute on Rural Design

Thursday, March 19th, 5:30pm  
2nd Floor Unity Room  
Jackie Gaughan Multicultural Center  
University of Nebraska Lincoln City  
Campus  
1505 S Street  
Lincoln, NE

Friday, March 20th, 2015, 8:00am  
Lancaster County Extension Offices  
44 Cherry Creek Rd  
Lincoln, NE

Saturday, March 21st, 1:00 pm:  
Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center  
11700 Southwest 100th Street  
Denton, NE



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LINCOLN-LANCASTER COUNTY  
PLANNING DEPARTMENT  
555 South 10th Street Suite 213 Lincoln, NE 68508  
402-441-7491 fax: 402-441-6377 lincoln.ne.gov



March 19, 2015

Dear Workshop Participants,

Thank you for your participation in the My Town, Lancaster County Workshop. We hope that you are as excited to be here as we are to have you! We are able to bring this workshop to you through an award from the Citizens' Institute on Rural Design™ (CIRD) which was received by the Lincoln and Lancaster County Planning Department, Lancaster County Board of Commissioners, and Lancaster County Extension Office, and we are very grateful for that support.

The Planning Department made application for this award in 2014 under the guidance of then Director, Marvin Krout. Marvin was a community minded individual who believed in the power of design to make places special and truly improve the lives of those who live in them. Marvin had a strong desire to reach out to our fellow Lancaster County towns and bring to them tools and resources they might access to help them identify and enhance the unique aspects of each through community participation and design. Unfortunately, Marvin passed away in November of last year after a brief illness and is not here today to welcome you personally, as he would have liked.

On behalf of the Planning Department, Lancaster County Commissioners, Lancaster County Extension Office, and our partners at the Citizens Institute on Rural Design™, I want to welcome you to this workshop and encourage you to participate as fully as you can. You will be receiving a good deal of information over the next three days. I hope this will energize and inspire you to take the next steps in community development through design in each of your towns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David R. Cary".

David R. Cary, Acting Director  
Lincoln and Lancaster County Planning Department





Citizens' Institute on Rural Design



March 19, 2015

Dear My Town, Lancaster County Participants,

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to this workshop, made possible through an award from the Citizens' Institute on Rural Design™. As small towns in a county dominated by a large city, you are familiar with the challenges posed. However, there are many advantages that, with your creativity, initiative, and determination can serve to strengthen your communities. About a year ago, the Lancaster County Commissioners, Lincoln and Lancaster County Planning Department, and Lancaster County Extension Office joined together to make application on behalf of your towns for this award. We are very pleased to be able to bring this wonderful workshop to you. The workshop is a first step in creating a toolbox of design techniques and resources to help your community recapture its sense of place, identify and build upon its unique assets, and retain the small town character you love.

Over the next three days I hope you take full advantage of the wonderful speakers that have been assembled to help you along your journey. You will probably learn more than you expected, but you may also find that you know more than you thought. These are your towns, your homes, and their future is up to you. Through this workshop we hope that you will find that there are many resources available, and people who really care about making rural places better places to live, work and play. The future is very bright for Lancaster County, and your towns are a big part of that.

Thank you in advance for spending your precious time away from work and family over these next three days. Your communities are what they are because people like you have always been willing to give of themselves.

Sincerely,

Roma Amundson, Chair

Lancaster County Board of Commissioners



## Welcome to Lancaster County's Citizens' Institute on Rural Design™ Workshop!

We are very pleased to join the City of Lincoln and Lancaster County's Department of Planning in bringing this workshop to Lincoln, NE on behalf of a cohort of 12 Lancaster County towns and villages, which were selected to receive technical assistance through a competitive national process.

For the past 22 years, the Citizens' Institute on Rural Design™ (CIRD) has been providing facilitated planning workshops to help communities generate locally driven solutions to pressing design challenges. CIRD convenes local leaders, non-profit organizations, and residents together with a team of specialists in design, planning, historic preservation, place branding, and rural community revitalization to work together with local partners to recognize their own potential and collective capacity to implement change, recapture their sense of place, identify and build upon their unique assets, and retain their small town character.

This workshop will cover a range of tools, techniques and resources to help 12 rural villages of Lancaster County define and implement small-scale, low cost, improvement projects in collaboration with Lancaster County.

Over the course of two and a half days, workshop participants will engage in discussions covering a broad array of interrelated topics, including public engagement, community planning, Placemaking, strategies for community collaboration, economic revitalization, and leadership development. Presentations will be given not only by our team of renowned community and economic development professionals, but by staff from Lancaster County and representatives from each of the participating towns. We will work together to lead discussions on how these communities can build on their assets and address their challenges.

The Resource Team Members include:

- Don Macke, Co-Founder and Director of the Entrepreneurial Communities
- Ed McMahon, Senior Fellow for Sustainable Development, Urban Land Institute
- David Nelson, Project Associate, Project for Public Spaces
- Cynthia Nikitin, Director, Citizens' Institute on Rural Design™ (CIRD), Senior Vice President Project for Public Spaces
- Milan Wall, Co-Director of the Heartland Center for Leadership Development

This notebook will provide you with background information on the 12 rural villages of Lincoln and Lancaster County, as well as articles related to the subject matter to be addressed in the workshop.

## Citizens' Institute on Rural Design

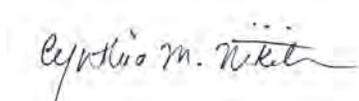
In it, you will find:

- Background on the Citizens' Institute on Rural Design™ program and our partners
- Biographies of the speakers
- Workshop agenda
- Articles on community and economic development

Please use this notebook as a guide to the workshop. We encourage you to peruse the articles, and familiarize yourselves with the background provided on each of the speakers and presenters beforehand. For more resources, we invite you to visit the Resources for Rural Communities page on the CIRD website <http://www.rural-design.org/resources>.

We are confident that with the participation and collaboration of community members like yourself, along with great professional expertise from both inside and outside the community, this workshop will move rural communities across Lancaster County forward in planning for their future while engaging their residents in the day-today life of their towns.

Thank you for participating and enjoy the workshop!



Cynthia Nikitin, Director  
Citizens' Institute on Rural Design™



## 2. My Town, Lancaster County Workshop Agenda

March 19 – 21, 2015

### Thursday, March 19

Jackie Gaughan Multicultural Center, Second Floor, Unity Room  
University of Nebraska City Campus, 1505 S Street, Lincoln, NE

Park in Larsen Building Garage at 14<sup>th</sup> and Q Street, metered on-street parking (free after 6 pm), limited handicap parking north of building on S Street.

**5:30 PM Secrets of Successful Communities**

**ED MCMAHON – Urban Land Institute**

Ed McMahon, Senior Fellow at the Urban Land Institute, will provide examples of how communities can grow while also preserving what they love.

**6:30 PM Welcome** – Workshop participants adjourn to Heritage Room, UNL Student Union

**ROMA AMUNDSEN – Chairperson, Lancaster County Board of Commissioners**

**SARA HARTZELL – Lancaster County Planner**

Welcome, introductions, and a brief overview of what to expect throughout the workshop.

**6:45 PM Dinner**

**7:15 PM My Town Reports**

A representative from each town will give a 5-minute presentation introducing their town and sharing the goals they identified to discuss at the workshop

### Friday, March 20

Lancaster County Extension Offices  
444 Cherry Creek Rd, Lincoln, NE

Park in lot east and south of building

**8:00 AM Breakfast**

**8:15 AM Welcome**

Welcome and a chance for attendees to ask questions.

**8:30 AM SOAR Session**

**Lincoln-Lancaster County Planning Department Staff**

**University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension Staff**

Towns will brainstorm their Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, and Results (SOAR).

**9:55 AM Break**

**10:00 AM Learning Carousel**

Participants will be divided into groups to attend three 45-minute presentations.

**1 Community Planning**

BRANDON GARRETT – Lincoln-Lancaster County Planning Department

PAUL BARNES – Lincoln-Lancaster County Planning Department

Learn the basics of community planning including comprehensive plans, zoning and subdivision regulations, and design standards.

**2 Public Engagement**

MILAN WALL – Heartland Center for Leadership Development

Learn about engaging the members of your community and how to get them involved.

**3 Placemaking**

CYNTHIA NIKITIN – Project for Public Spaces

Learn about Placemaking as an approach to community revitalization.

**12:30 PM Lunch**

**12:40 PM Nebraska Success Stories**

SHIRLEY NIEMEYER – Ashland Steering Committee

DOUG FRIEDLI-Nebraska City Community Foundation

DORIS OURECKY – Nebraska Czechs of Wilber

Speakers from 3 Nebraska towns will share the success they have experienced identifying and strengthening their community’s unique sense of identity through history, the arts, cultural celebrations, and intensive public engagement.

**2:00 PM Collaboration**

DAVID NELSON – Project for Public Spaces

Discuss possible opportunities for Lancaster County towns to form collaborative partnerships and share their resources.

**2:30 PM Break**

**2:35 PM Economic Development**

DON MACKE – Center for Rural Entrepreneurship

NICOLE SEDLACEK – Holt County Economic Development

MIKE FEEKEN – St. Paul Development Corporation

GREG PTACEK – Neligh Economic Development Corporation

Economic development strategies for improving small towns.

**3:50 PM Public & Private Resources**

DEBORAH DRBAL – USDA Rural Development

Nebraska Department of Economic Development Staff

GRETA LEACH – Nebraska Community Foundation

Learn about technical and funding tools and resources available from governmental and private sources.

**5:00 PM My Town Discussion**

Towns will come together in small groups to share their initial reactions to the day’s sessions and generate responses to three key questions.

**5:45 PM Break for the Day**

## Saturday, March 21

Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center, Education Center  
11700 Southwest 100th Street, Denton, NE

Parking in gravel lot west of building

**8:30 AM Welcome & Breakfast**

Welcome and a chance for attendees to ask questions.

**9:00 AM Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper**

CYNTHIA NIKITIN – Project for Public Spaces

Learn low cost, low risk, high impact interventions for improving your community.

**10:00 AM Leadership Development**

MILAN WALL – Heartland Center for Leadership Development

Learn how to develop a public involvement strategy and identify and develop leaders in your community.

**11:00 AM My Town Discussion**

Towns will discuss thoughts from yesterday, any additional goals desired, and next steps.

**12:00 PM Working Lunch**

Towns will prepare materials for a poster presentation where they will share their thoughts on next steps for their community.

**1:00 PM Poster Presentation & Wrap-Up**

The public is invited to join the workshop for a presentation of the workshop results.

## 3a. Project Background: CIRD

### Citizens' Institute on Rural Design™ Announces Awards:

#### Communities from Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, and New Hampshire to Host Rural Design Workshops

Washington, DC (July 23, 2014) — The Citizens' Institute on Rural Design™ (CIRD) announced today the four organizations selected to host this year's rural design technical assistance workshops. CIRD workshops bring together local leaders, non-profits, community organizations, and citizens and a team of specialists in design, planning, community and economic development, and creative placemaking to address design challenges identified by the host community. Selected from a pool of 48 applicants by an advisory panel, the four 2014 workshop hosts are:

- Carl Small Town Center: Houston Community, Mississippi
- Oregon County Food Producers and Artisans Co-Op: Oregon County, Missouri
- Lincoln and Lancaster County Planning Department: Lancaster County, Nebraska
- University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension (UNHCE): Franklin, New Hampshire

The community of Houston, Mississippi (pop. 3,562) will work with the Carl Small Town Center to generate a design for a cycling/pedestrian connection leading from their newest attraction - the Tanglefoot Trail - to the Natchez Trace Parkway, a 444-mile scenic drive and major destination for cyclists, to downtown Houston located seven miles away. The workshop in Oregon County, Missouri (pop. 10,997) will guide the renovation of one (in a series of) vacant buildings located on the town square into a multi-destination market and community center to serve as an economic incubator for artists and food producers in the county. Lancaster County, Nebraska will host a region-wide workshop gathering residents and leaders together from 12 rural villages (total pop. 7,967) to create a toolbox of design techniques and resources to help them recapture their sense of place. Franklin, New Hampshire's (pop. 8,456) workshop will address how to revitalize the downtown in keeping with the goals of ensuring affordable housing options and age-friendly design for senior citizens statewide. Each of the selected organizations applied with multiple local partners. "We were extremely impressed by the volume and high quality of the applications we received. The selected communities demonstrate rich potential for leveraging partnerships to take action on a wide range of rural design issues," said Cynthia Nikitin, CIRD Program Director and Senior Vice President of Project for Public Spaces, Inc. "Rural design is a valuable tool for citizens to use to build on existing assets and improve their community's quality of life and long-term viability."

CIRD offers annual competitive funding to as many as four small towns and rural communities to host a two-and-a-half day rural design technical workshop. CIRD awardees receive \$7,000 to support the workshop, in-kind design expertise and technical assistance valued at \$35,000, and additional training through webinars, conference calls, and web-based resources.

CommunityMatters® and CIRD will be offering capacity building events. These quarterly calls and webinars, open to the public, are geared towards people working on issues related to rural design or planning. These instructional calls will help participants develop the skills they need to succeed, as well as provide inspiration to help them get started. More calls and registration information will be provided on the CIRD web site later this summer. [www.rural-design.org](http://www.rural-design.org)

## About the Partners

**The Citizens' Institute on Rural Design™ (CIRD)** is a National Endowment for the Arts leadership initiative in partnership with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Project for Public Spaces, Inc., along with the Orton Family Foundation and the CommunityMatters® Partnership. Established in 1991, CIRD has convened more than 60 rural design workshops in all regions of the country, empowering residents to leverage local assets in order to build better places to live, work, and play. For more information visit [www.rural-design.org](http://www.rural-design.org).

**CommunityMatters®** is a national partnership of seven organizations with the common goal of building strong communities through the improvement of local civic infrastructure. The CommunityMatters partners aim to equip community members to strengthen their places and inspire change. The partners are: Deliberative Democracy Consortium; Grassroots Grantmakers; National Coalition for Dialogue & Deliberation; New America Foundation; Orton Family Foundation; Project for Public Spaces; and Strong Towns. CommunityMatters is a program of the Orton Family Foundation.

**The National Endowment for the Arts**, established by Congress in 1965, is an independent agency of the federal government. To date, the NEA has awarded more than \$4 billion to support artistic excellence, creativity, and innovation for the benefit of individuals and communities. Join the discussion on how art works. Visit the NEA at [arts.gov](http://arts.gov)

**USDA Rural Development** administers and manages housing, business and community infrastructure programs through a national network of state and local offices. Rural Development has an active portfolio of more than \$176 billion in loans and loan guarantees. These programs are designed to improve the economic stability of rural communities, businesses, residents, farmers and ranchers and improve the quality of life in rural America. [rurdev.usda.gov](http://rurdev.usda.gov)

**Project for Public Spaces (PPS)** is a nonprofit planning, design, and educational organization dedicated to helping people create and sustain public spaces that build stronger communities. Founded in 1975, PPS has completed projects in over 2,500 communities and all 50 US states. PPS has become an internationally recognized center for resources, tools, and inspiration about Placemaking. [pps.org](http://pps.org)

**The Orton Family Foundation**, founded in 1995, helps small cities and towns harness the inherent ability of citizens to imagine and achieve a culturally and economically vibrant future for their community. The Foundation's Heart & Soul approach supports citizens in steering their town's future by discovering the characteristics and attributes valued most in their community and, then, by placing those shared values at the center of local decision making. [orton.org](http://orton.org)

## 3b. Project Background: Lancaster County

### Rural Design Workshop Engages Local Leaders and Residents to Shape Change in Lancaster County

#### Three Day My Town, Lancaster Program Brings Design Techniques and Resources to Small Towns

LINCOLN, Ne. (March 9, 2015)—Lancaster County was selected in July 2014 to host a community workshop as part of the Citizens' Institute on Rural Design™ (CIRD), a national program sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts. The My Town, Lancaster County workshop takes place March 19th - 21st, in Lincoln, NE, and will convene residents and stakeholders from 12 small towns around Lancaster County.

For the past 22 years, the Citizens' Institute on Rural Design™ (CIRD) has been providing facilitated planning workshops to help communities generate locally driven solutions to pressing design challenges. CIRD convenes local leaders, non-profit organizations, and residents together with a team of specialists in design, planning, historic preservation, place branding, and rural community revitalization to work together with local partners to recognize their own potential and collective capacity to implement change, recapture their sense of place, identify and build upon their unique assets, and retain their small town character .

The three-day workshop will address the challenges and opportunities afforded to small towns in Lancaster County, a County dominated by the City of Lincoln. Focusing on important aspects of community spirit and integrity, the workshop will create a toolbox of design techniques and resources to help communities recapture their sense of place and identity. The final day will include an open house and presentations to residents of the 12 participating communities.

The public is invited to join workshop participants for a presentation by Ed McMahon of the Urban Land Institute. McMahon will share his Secrets of Successful Communities and provide examples of how communities can grow while also preserving what they love. The presentation, will be followed by a reception hosted by the Nebraska Chapter of the American Planning Association. Thursday, March 19 at 5:30 p.m. at the Jackie Gaughan Multicultural Center, 1505 S Street, in the Unity Room on the 2nd floor.

The public is also invited to join workshop participants as they share results of their discussions and next steps each town will take to reach their goals and contribute to their plan of action. An open house and poster presentation will begin at 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, March 21 at the Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center, 11700 SW 100th Street, just two miles south of Denton.

If you are interested in learning more about the My Town, Lancaster County project, please visit:

- [www.lincoln.ne.gov](http://www.lincoln.ne.gov) Keyword: My Town,
- Our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/mytownlancaster>,
- or call 402-441-7491 and ask about "My Town".

## 3c. Project Background: Area Demographics

	Small Towns				
	Total	Bennet	Davey	Denton	Firth
<b>2010 Population</b>	<b>7967</b>	<b>719</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>590</b>
Under 18	2,491(31.3)	191(26.6)	40(26)	57(30)	190(32.2)
65 or over	794(10)	83(11.5)	24(15.6)	28(14.7)	108(18.3)
<b>One Race</b>	<b>7,886(99)</b>	<b>712(99)</b>	<b>150(97.4)</b>	<b>189(99.5)</b>	<b>582(98.6)</b>
White	7,758(98.4)	711(99.8)	149(99.3)	185(97.9)	530(91)
Asian	30(0.4)	1(.2)	0	2(1)	4(.7)
African American	21(0.3)	0	0	2(1)	1(.2)
Am. Indian& Alaskan Nat.	16(0.2)	0	0	0	7(1.2)
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	1(0)	0	1(.6)	0	0
Some other Race	60(0.7)	0	0	0	40(6.9)
<b>Two or more races</b>	<b>79(1.0)</b>	<b>7(1)</b>	<b>3(1.9)</b>	<b>1(.5)</b>	<b>8(1.4)</b>
White & Am. Indian and Alaskan Native	19(24.0)	2(28.6)	2(66.7)	0	1(12.5)
White and Asian	19(24.0)	0	0	0	3(37.5)
White & African Am	33(41.8)	5(71.4)	0	0	4(50)
White & Some Other Race	7(8.8)	0	1(33.3)	0	0
<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>137(1.7)</b>	<b>2(.3)</b>	<b>2(1.3)</b>	<b>3(1.6)</b>	<b>53(9)</b>
<b>Households – Total units</b>	<b>2,962</b>	<b>286</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>218*</b>
<b>Average Household Size</b>	<b>2.62</b>	<b>2.51</b>	<b>2.52</b>	<b>2.32</b>	<b>2.73</b>
Occupied	2,877(97.1)	306(93.5)	61(92.4)	82(95.3)	204(93.6)
Owner	2,335(81.2)	260(85)	52(85.2)	57(72)	141(69.1)
Renter	542(18.8)	46(15)	9(14.8)	25(28)	63(30.9)
Rental Vacancy	5.9% Avg	0	0	0	0.031
<b>Family Households - Tot</b>	<b>2,185(75.9)</b>	<b>199(69.6)</b>	<b>40(65.6)</b>	<b>51(62.2)</b>	<b>147(72)</b>
<b>Average Family Size</b>	<b>3.08</b>	<b>2.99</b>	<b>3.18</b>	<b>2.96</b>	<b>3.31</b>
W/Children <18	1,214(55.6)	101(50.8)	18(45)	21(52.5)	90(61)
Husband & Wife	1,827(83.6)	163(81.9)	33(82.5)	40(78.4)	120(81.6)
W/Children <18	962(52.7)	82(50.3)	12(36.4)	16(40)	73(60.8)
Male, no wife	115(5.3)	12(6)	3(7.5)	2(3.9)	8(6.7)
W/Children <18	78(67.8)	4(33.3)	2(66.7)	0	4(50)
Female, no husband	242(11.1)	24(12)	4(10)	9(17.6)	19(15.8)
W/Children <18	172(71.1)	15(62.5)	2(50)	5(55.6)	13(68.4)

Data shown as number and (percent)

Data based on 2010 US Census Summary File

\*Firth has 44(7.5) people in group quarters (nursing home)

\*\*Waverly has 50(1.5) people in group quarters

Hallam	Hickman	Malcolm	Panama	Raymond	Roca	Sprague	Waverly
<b>213</b>	<b>1657</b>	<b>382</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>3,277</b>
52(24.4)	550(33.2)	102(26.7)	83(32.4)	36(21.6)	65(29.5)	32(22.5)	1,093(33.4)
15(7)	128(7.7)	29(7.6)	29(11.3)	14(8.4)	12(5.4)	23(16.2)	301(9.2)
<b>212(99.3)</b>	<b>1,642(99.1)</b>	<b>379(99.2)</b>	<b>255(99.6)</b>	<b>163(97.6)</b>	<b>214(97.2)</b>	<b>139(97.9)</b>	<b>3,249(99.1)</b>
203(95.7)	1,628(99.1)	372(98.2)	252(98.8)	160(98.2)	213(99.5)	138(99.3)	3,217(99)
7(3.3)	3(.2)	0	1(.4)	2(1.2)	1(.5)	0	9(0.3)
0	6(.4)	4(1)	2(.8)	1(.6)	0	0	5(0.2)
2(.9)	0	2(.5)	0	0	0	0	5(0.2)
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
0	5(.3)	1(.3)	0	0	0	1(0.7)	13(0.4)
<b>1(.5)</b>	<b>15(.9)</b>	<b>3(.8)</b>	<b>1(.4)</b>	<b>4(2.4)</b>	<b>5(2.3)</b>	<b>3(2.0)</b>	<b>28(0.9)</b>
1(100)	4(26.7)	0	0	1(25)	0	0	8(28.6)
0	5(33.3)	0	0	2(50)	4(1.8)	0	5(17.9)
0	6(40)	3(100)	0	1(25)	2(0.9)	2(66.7)	10(35.7)
0	0	0	0	0	0	1(33.3)	5(17.9)
<b>0</b>	<b>27(1.6)</b>	<b>1(.3)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2(1.4)</b>	<b>47(1.4)</b>
<b>81</b>	<b>587</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>1152**</b>
<b>2.73</b>	<b>2.82</b>	<b>2.67</b>	<b>2.84</b>	<b>2.35</b>	<b>2.72</b>	<b>2.33</b>	<b>2.9</b>
78(96.3)	587(96.4)	143(87.2)	90(90)	71(93.4)	81(97.6)	61(96.8)	1,113(96.6)
68(87.2)	473(80.6)	114(79.7)	76(84.4)	63(88.7)	70(86.4)	51(83.6)	910(81.8)
10(12.8)	114(19.4)	29(20.3)	14(15.6)	8(11.3)	11(13.6)	10(16.4)	203(18.2)
0	0.065	0.354	0	0.2	0	0	0.056
63(80.8)	463(78.9)	106(74.1)	66(73.3)	45(63.4)	61(75.3)	41(67.2)	903((81.1)
<b>2.95</b>	<b>3.22</b>	<b>3.04</b>	<b>3.36</b>	<b>2.93</b>	<b>3.07</b>	<b>2.68</b>	<b>3.24</b>
30(47.6)	268(57.9)	51(48.1)	33(50)	17(37.8)	33(54.1)	15(36.6)	537(59.4)
51(80.9)	387(83.6)	92(86.8)	60(90.9)	39(86.7)	53(86.9)	35 (85.4)	754(83.5)
21(41.2)	212(54.8)	42(45.7)	28(46.7)	15(38.5)	27(50.9)	10(24.4)	424(56.2)
4(6.3)	24(6.2)	4(3.8)	4(6.1)	2(4.4)	1(1.9)	3(7.3)	48(5.3)
4(100)	17(70.8)	3(75)	3(75)	1(50)	1(100)	3(100)	36(75)
8(12.7)	52(13.4)	10(9.4)	2(3)	3(6.7)	7(13.2)	3(7.3)	101(11.2)
5(62.5)	39(75)	6(60)	2(100)	1(33.3)	5(71.4)	2(66.7)	77(76.2)

Data shown as number and (percent)

Data based on 2010 US Census Summary File

\*Firth has 44(7.5) people in group quarters (nursing home)

\*\*Waverly has 50(1.5) people in group quarters

## 3c. Area Demographics Continued

	Lancaster	Lincoln	Small Towns Total
<b>2010 Population</b>	<b>285,407</b>	<b>258,379</b>	<b>7967</b>
Under 18	65,901(23.1)	58,702(22.7)	2,491(31.3)
65 or over	31,101(10.9)	27,733(10.7)	794(10)
<b>One Race</b>	<b>277,522(97.2)</b>	<b>250,717(97)</b>	<b>7,886(99)</b>
White	248,615(89.6)	222,331(88.7)	7,758(98.4)
Asian	9,961(3.6)	9,773(3.9)	30(0.4)
African American	9,920(3.6)	9,824(3.9)	21(0.3)
Am. Indian & Alaskan Nat.	2,140(0.8)	2,073(0.8)	16(0.2)
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	150(0.05)	147(0.06)	1(0)
Some other Race	6,736(2.4)	6,569(2.6)	60(0.7)
<b>Two or more races</b>	<b>7,885(2.8)</b>	<b>7,662(3.0)</b>	<b>79(1.0)</b>
White & Am. Indian and Alaskan Native	1,312(16.6)	1,251(16.3)	19(24.0)
White and Asian	1,391(17.6)	1,338(17.5)	19(24.0)
White & African Am	2,884(36.6)	2,817(36.8)	33(41.8)
White & Some Other Race	834(10.6)	811(10.6)	7(8.8)
<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>16,685(5.8)</b>	<b>16,182(6.3)</b>	<b>137(1.7)</b>
<b>Households – Total units</b>	<b>120,875</b>	<b>110,546</b>	<b>2,962</b>
<b>Average Household Size</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>2.36</b>	<b>2.62</b>
Occupied	113,373(93.8)	103,546(93.7)	2,877(97.1)
Owner	69,309(61)	60,664(58.6)	2,335(81.2)
Renter	44,064 (38.9)	42,882(41.1)	542(18.8)
Rental Vacancy	7.50%	7.50%	5.9% Avg
<b>Family Households - Tot</b>	<b>68,210(60.2)</b>	<b>60,300(58.2)</b>	<b>2,185(75.9)</b>
<b>Average Family Size</b>	<b>3.01</b>	<b>3.01</b>	<b>3.08</b>
W/Children <18	32,121(47.1)	28,725(47.6)	1,214(55.6)
Husband & Wife	52,693(77.3)	45,567(75.6)	1,827(83.6)
W/Children <18	22,747(43.2)	19,826(43.5)	962(52.7)
Male, no wife	4,492(6.6)	4,197(7.0)	115(5.3)
W/Children <18	2,306(51.3)	2,141(51)	78(67.8)
Female, no husband	11,025(16.2)	10,536(17.5)	242(11.1)
W/Children <18	7,068(64.1)	6,758(64.1)	172(71.1)

## 4. Resource Team Members



**Paul Barnes**  
Development Review Planner

Paul Barnes has been in City government for the past 10 years. He began his career working for the City of Sioux City as a Planner. Paul was then promoted to the position of Neighborhood Services Supervisor where he supervised housing rehab and neighborhood improvement projects in low and moderate-income neighborhoods. Paul began employment with the Lincoln/Lancaster County Planning Department in 2012. He is a Development Review Planner and also works on long-range plans such as the South Haymarket Neighborhood Study. Paul obtained his B.S. in Community and Regional Planning from Iowa State University in 2004 and an M.B.A. from the University of South Dakota in 2008. Paul is a member of the American Institute for Certified Planners.



**David Cary**  
Long Range Planning Manager, the Lincoln/Lancaster County Planning Department

David Cary is the Long Range Planning Manager with the Lincoln/Lancaster County Planning Department and is currently serving as the Acting Director of the department. David has 21 years of experience in the planning field having worked multiple years in the Chicago area, five years for the City of Omaha, and 12 years for Lincoln/Lancaster County. David's expertise includes transportation planning, land use planning, and long range planning. He earned his Masters in Regional Planning from the University of Massachusetts-Amherst and has a BA from the University of Notre Dame. When he is not at work keeping the Planning Department running smoothly, David enjoys spending time with his wife and two children and exercising on Lincoln's great trail network.

**Deborah Drbal**  
Business and Cooperative Specialist, USDA Rural Development, Lincoln, NE

Deborah D. Drbal, Business and Cooperative Specialist, USDA Rural Development, Lincoln has been employed by Rural Development since March 1989. As a Business and Cooperative Specialist Deborah's primary responsibility is for Specialty Lending loans and grants: the Rural Microentrepreneur Assistance Program (RMAP), Intermediary Relending Program (IRP), Rural Business Enterprise Grant (RBEG) and Rural Business Opportunity

Grant (RBOG). Deborah has been a Federal employee for 29 years. Prior to joining the Nebraska Rural Development staff she was employed at the Veteran's Administration Hospital in San Diego, California. A native of Lincoln, Deborah's most enjoyable role is that of "Aunt Debbie" to a niece and three nephews.



## Mike Feeken

Executive Director of the St Paul Development Corporation

Mike Feeken is a jack of all trades, master of some. Having grown up in the nearby Crete/Dorchester area and now living in St Paul, Nebraska – Mike knows about small town success and struggle. Mike has been the Executive Director of the St Paul Development Corporation since June 2005, is a member of way too many Boards, and has a very understanding wife and two boys.



## Doug Friedli

Executive Director of the Missouri River Basin Lewis & Clark Interpretive Trail and Visitor Center

Doug was hired as the first full-time Executive Director of the Missouri River Basin Lewis & Clark Interpretive Trail and Visitor Center in October 2012. Prior to that he worked as a volunteer for over 15 years to help take the Center from vision to reality. He was instrumental in raising the \$6.5 million in public and private funds to develop and construct the facility and exhibits. In his current position, Doug is responsible for fundraising and program development. He oversees the five-year strategic plan developed by the board in 2013.

Doug was a community banker for 34 years, including serving as President and CEO of the First National Bank Northeast based in Lyons, Nebraska and President and CEO of the former Otoe County Bank, now known as Arbor Bank, in Nebraska City. He continues to serve on the Board of Arbor Bank.

Doug was Director of Community Fund Development for the Nebraska Community Foundation for 10 years. He worked with community decision-makers in rural communities to strategize how charitable gifts can be used to improve quality of life, enhance economic development, and build community capacity.

Doug has a wide range of experiences having served as a volunteer on numerous community non-profit, economic development, and historic preservation committees. Born and raised in the rural community of Milford, Nebraska, Doug is a lifelong Nebraskan. He is a graduate of the University of Nebraska at Lincoln. He and his wife Pat live in Nebraska City.



## Brandon Garrett

City Planner, Long Range Division of the Planning Department

Brandon Garrett is originally from Great Bend in central Kansas. After receiving his Bachelor's degree from Kansas State University, he moved to Lincoln with his wife in 2002 to obtain his Master of Community and Regional Planning at UNL (2004). He has been a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners since 2006. He has also worked for the City of Lincoln since 2006 after a two year stint in the private and non-profit sectors. He is currently a city planner in the Long Range Division of the Planning Department where he works on data, land use, and urban design. His hobbies include bike riding, watching Husker sports, anthropology, travelling, playing Legos with his son, gardening, brewing beer, and raising backyard chickens.



## Stacey Groshong Hageman

Community Planner

Stacey Groshong Hageman is a professional community planner with 4 years experience. She received a bachelor's degree in Architecture with an emphasis in Landscape Architecture, a master's in Architecture, and a master's in Community and Regional Planning from the University of Nebraska. Stacey has extensive experience in design and 3D visualization, with the ability to produce photorealistic renderings of proposed scenarios. Stacey has been involved in the development of design standards and subarea plans for the City of Lincoln. She works closely with the Historic Preservation Planner in historical research and design standards review and helps staff the cities three design review boards.



## Sara Hartzell

County Planner, Lincoln and Lancaster County Planning Department and Workshop Coordinator

Sara Hartzell has been a planner for the Lincoln and Lancaster County Planning Department for the past five years, with a 3½ year term in the same department before that. She took over the job of County Planner in 2011 with the retirement of her predecessor. Sara acts as the primary contact for County issues, as well as the department's lead environmental planner. Sara is a dual graduate of the University of Nebraska Lincoln with a BSEd in Secondary Education - Natural Sciences, and a Master of Community and Regional Planning. Sara had a prior career as a high school science

teacher before returning to graduate school, and has worked in the fields of emergency management, cosmetology, environmental health and is a grocery store owner. She also served on the Planning Commission for the Village of Hallam for 10 years, ending when she and her husband moved to Lincoln after 24 years in Hallam. Sara has two grown children who have flown the nest, and three dogs with whom she is trying to replace them.



## Greta Leach

Affiliated Fund Development Coordinator – Eastern Nebraska

Greta Leach provides technical assistance and support for NCF affiliated funds in eastern Nebraska. Her professional experience includes nonprofit fundraising, grant administration, volunteer coordination and accounting.

Greta is a native of Aurora, Nebraska and now lives and offices in Lincoln. Prior to joining NCF in 2012, she directed fundraising and development programs for the Colorado Anti-Violence Program and The Gathering Place in Denver. She also has served as associate pastor for the First United Methodist Church in North Platte and as a senior auditor for an accounting firm in Denver. Greta received a bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and a master's of theological studies from the Iliff School of Theology.

Greta enjoys camping, hiking, and spending time with friends and family. She says the best thing about working at NCF is meeting so many interesting people across Nebraska and seeing people come together to make a difference in the communities they love.



## Don Macke

Co-Founder and Co-Director of the Center for Rural Entrepreneurship

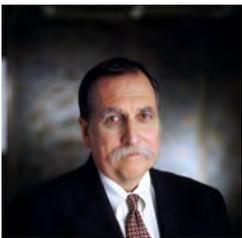
Don Macke is a Co-Founder and Co-Director of the Center for Rural Entrepreneurship. The Center works throughout the United States and Canada supporting research, outreach, professional development and policy work related to rural entrepreneurship.

Don has over 40 years of experience in the field of community economic development. He has served on the staff of the Nebraska Legislature, the Cabinet of the Nelson Administration in Nebraska, worked as a consultant in 45 states, Canada and the Caribbean. Since joining the Center, Don and the Center team has logged over 1 million miles travelling throughout rural North America.

Don leads the Center's entrepreneurial communities' solution area. E Communities helps communities and regions grow more effective, efficient and impactful systems of support for entrepreneurs as a way to strengthen local economies. The E Communities framework and process is proving valuable to communities and regions.

Another part of Don's work focuses on community development philanthropy and America's transfer of wealth (TOW) opportunity. The Center's TOW team has completed over 40 studies, covering over one-half of the counties and communities across the nation. Don is a co-founder of the Nebraska Community Foundation and served as its first Executive Director.

Don has a MA in Regional Economics and a BS in Environmental Science from the University of Nebraska at Lincoln. Lincoln Nebraska is Don's home. He is married to Jenny Carver, a Pre-School Special Education Teacher and they have two sons - Sam and Eric.



## Ed McMahon

Senior Fellow for Sustainable Development, Urban Land Institute

As the Senior Fellow for Sustainable Development, Ed McMahon leads ULI's worldwide efforts to conduct research and educational activities related to environmentally sensitive development policies and practices. He is also a senior staff adviser for ULI's Building Healthy Places Initiative, and is a sought-after speaker and thinker on health and real estate. He is currently at work on a major new report, Active Transportation and Real Estate: New Frontiers in Development, which will be released at ULI's Spring Meeting in Houston in May 2015.

Before joining the Institute in 2004, McMahon spent 14 years as the vice president and director of land use planning for the Conservation Fund in Arlington County, Virginia, where he helped protect more than 5 million acres of land of historic or natural significance. McMahon is also the cofounder and former president of Scenic America, a national nonprofit organization devoted to protecting America's scenic landscapes. Before that, he taught law and public policy at Georgetown University Law Center for nine years, and served in the U.S. Army, both at home and abroad.

McMahon is the author or coauthor of 15 books, including Conservation Communities: Creating Value with Nature, Open Space, and Agriculture; Better Models for Development in Virginia; Developing Sustainable Planned Communities; Green Infrastructure: Connecting Landscape and Communities; Land Conservation Finance; and Balancing Nature and Commerce in Gateway Communities.

He also writes regularly for Urban Land magazine, Citiwire, Planning Commissioners Journal, and other periodicals.

Over the past 25 years, McMahon has helped communities in all 50 states with a wide variety of community planning and economic development issues. He serves on several advisory boards and commissions, including the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Preservation Maryland, the Governor's Institute for Community Design, the Doris Duke Charitable Fund, and the Orton Family Foundation.

McMahon has an MA in urban studies from the University of Alabama at Birmingham and a JD from Georgetown University Law School. He and his wife live in Takoma Park, Maryland.



## Krista K. Mettscher

Single Family Housing Specialist, USDA Rural Development

After three years with the VA, Krista joined Rural Development in 1997, working in the Beatrice and Lincoln Area Office's directly with the public processing, underwriting, and approving, loans and grants. She became a member of the State Office Housing Staff in the downtown Lincoln Federal Building in September 2008 and recently celebrated her 20 year Federal anniversary. Although no longer directly involved with loan processing, Krista works extensively with regulation, delivery, oversight and outreach of the Single Family Housing Programs including the home purchase and repair programs.



## David Nelson

Project Associate, Project for Public Spaces

David is a transportation professional, physical planner, and urban designer from Nebraska. His focus is on how legible patterns of public space and transportation networks influence the cognitive image of place and on how the design of pedestrian facilities legitimizes or undermines normative behavior.

At PPS, David works on projects ranging from street typologies to form based codes to public space programming and design. As project manager for the Federal Highway Administration's Context Sensitive Solutions Clearinghouse, he uses communication best practices to connect transportation practitioners and citizens with emerging innovations in the discipline and supporting evidence on the benefits of contextuality.

Before joining PPS, David worked at the Voorhees Transportation Center at Rutgers University as a transit and bikeped researcher and graphic designer for the New Jersey Bicycle and Pedestrian Research Center and the New Jersey Safe Routes to School Resource Center.

While at the City of Omaha Planning Department, David cultivated walkability and bikeability through data and design projects. His wide array of initiatives included siting bicycle parking, designing signage, and coordinating the city's inaugural bicycle and pedestrian traffic counts.

## Shirley Niemeyer

Professor Emeritus, Extension Specialist/Research, Housing & Environment, University of Nebraska Lincoln

Shirley Niemeyer was an Extension Specialist in housing and environment at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, has been in leadership positions in state and national professional organizations serving as president of the national Housing Education and Research Association and receiving their 2006 Distinguished Service Award for education and research. She provided educational programs to 1000's of consumers and professionals and conducted research focusing on housing and the environment issues.

Currently, she is a volunteer with the American Lutheran Church for the Kids Kitchen and Clothes Closet in Ashland, serves on the Ashland Area Chamber of Commerce Board as the Education Chair, and the City Historic Business committee. She helped to initiate the UNL Extension Entrepreneur Community Activation Process funded in the NE Rural Futures.



## Cynthia Nikitin

Director, Citizens' Institute on Rural Design™, Senior Vice President, Project for Public Spaces

Cynthia Nikitin has led numerous large-scale multi-sectoral projects during her twenty three years with Project for Public Spaces. Cynthia's technical expertise stretches from the development of downtown master plans, transit facility and station area enhancement projects, to the creation of corridor-wide transportation and land use strategies, to the development of public art master plans for major cities, and the coalescing of government buildings, libraries and cultural institutions into civic centers. Cynthia is currently directing the Citizens' Institute on Rural Design, a leadership initiative of the National Endowment for the Arts focused on providing technical design assistance to

rural communities and small towns across the United States. She is also a regular keynote speaker at public forums, training sessions, and public workshops around the world. Cynthia is an expert in using placemaking to create safer cities and upgrade informal settlements in the developing world. She is currently spearheading PPS's alliance with UN-HABITAT and the Ax:son Johnson Foundation to create 300 great public spaces in cities across the developing world in fulfillment of a UN Habitat General Resolution that seeks to incorporate public space planning and programming as part of slum upgrading, gender mainstreaming, and urban regeneration projects. She has lead placemaking training initiatives for the City Council of Nairobi and the City of Johannesburg. Cynthia is also PPS's representative on the UN Habitat's Global Network for Safer Cities.

Cynthia is also a leader on using investments in walking and transit to leverage livability goals. She authored one of the first books on transportation and livable communities, has run more than 30 comprehensive transit and corridor planning projects, and recently completed a research project for the US Federal Transit Administration aimed at developing evaluation and engagement tools to assist low-income communities in becoming involved in the transportation planning process. Under contract to NYS DOT, she managed a three year TOD education and planning initiative for 8 communities along the Tappan Zee Bridge Corridor. Currently she is working to help revitalize two of New Jersey's most distressed cities using safer places and creative placemaking techniques.

Cynthia has delivered keynote addresses at many US and Canadian Library Association events and the Alberta Museum and Americans for the Arts annual conferences. She is an adjunct faculty member of Clark University in Worcester, MA and guest lectures at universities across North America, in Moscow, Russia, and South Korea.



## Doris Ourecky

Chairman of the Hotel Wilber Board of Directors and President of the Wilber Czech Museum

Doris was born in Lincoln, NE, and attended most of her school years in Lincoln until her father bought the John Deere Implement store in Wilber during her junior year in high school- thus her "transplant" to Wilber. She attended the University of Nebraska, Lincoln then married her high school sweetheart who was a farmer and she was his partner for 45 years until they retired in 2000. They have 2 daughters and a son and seven grandchildren.

Doris was selected as one of the 12 "movers and shakers" committee in Wilber and has been VERY active in the Nebraska Czechs of Wilber. She served as chairman of the local Czech Queen committee from 1966 to 2007. She was co-founder and chairman of the

National Czech Queen Pageant from 1986 to 2006.

Doris has served as an officer in the following organizations: Women Involved in Farm Economics "WIFE", Order of the Eastern Star, NE Czechs of Wilber, Selective Services Board, PEO, Rotary, Southeast NE Farm Safety Board. She is presently chairman of the Hotel Wilber Board of Directors and President of the Wilber Czech Museum and gives town walking tours of Wilber besides being very active in her Lutheran Church.



## Greg Ptacek

Director of Economic Development for the City of Neligh

Greg Ptacek is the Director of Economic Development for the City of Neligh. He is a graduate of Wayne State College with a dual degree in Political Science and History. He went on to the University of Nebraska at Omaha's Master of Public Administration program but real life got in the way and he is two classes shy of his Master's. Greg's passion for rural Nebraska drove him to his current position where he promotes the growth of Neligh. Ptacek is heavily involved with several local organizations and has developed strong relations with UNL's Rural Futures Institute and the Engler Agribusiness College. Greg has a wonderful wife, who he believes is slightly blind, and two children under three.



## David Taladay

Executive Director of the Southeast Nebraska Development District (SENDD)

David Taladay has been the Executive Director of the Southeast Nebraska Development District (SENDD) since 2009. David reorganized the organization in July, 2010 into an Economic Development District consisting of 15-dues paying counties and 139- member communities and "certified" by the Economic Development Administration (EDA). Responsible to the Board of Directors for developing and implementing an annual Work Plan. Responsible for the day-to-day organization and management of all staff.

Prior to 2009, David worked at Southeast Nebraska Development District (SENDD) in Lincoln, Nebraska. After joining the organization to fill a "Shared Engineer" position for smaller communities, he became a lead staff member in development for numerous continuing programs in the District:

1. Region wide and Community "Housing Rehabilitation Programs"
2. "Micro-business Lending Program"
3. Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)-Economic Development Financial Packager Program
4. Multi-community Interlocal Agreement for "Shared Services/Personnel"
5. Program Coordinator for the Southeast Nebraska Affordable Housing Council, Inc. (SENAHC).
6. Design and development of the Award winning "Community Development Strategic Planning Initiative" (CD&SPI) for the Southeast Regional Group (17-counties)
7. Management of Local Revolving Loan Programs

David is deeply involved in Community Development, Economic Development and Housing Development activities for the District, numerous grant programs have been accessed through my leadership at the District; public works infrastructure, planning programs, business financing programs and housing development programs.

## Milan Wall

Co-Director of the Heartland Center for Leadership Development

Milan Wall, Co-Director of the Heartland Center for Leadership Development, is a management and communications expert with more than 40 years' experience in dealing with the critical issues facing American society and culture. Mr. Wall has been a newspaper reporter and editorial columnist, a university lecturer and a speaker at regional and national conferences on such topics as educational leadership, economic development and uses of technology in education. Before he helped found the Heartland Center, he was Executive Vice President of the University of Mid-America, a multi-state consortium that was recognized internationally for its imaginative approaches to adult education. With Dr. Vicki Luther, he is co-author of a number of publications on leadership and community development, including *The Entrepreneurial Community: A Strategic Leadership Approach to Community Survival*, *Clues to Rural Community Survival* and *Schools as Entrepreneurs: Helping Small Towns Survive*. Previously, he served as editor of the *Nebraska School Leader*, which won three national awards for excellence among state publications on education during his tenure. In 1993, Mr. Wall was honored with the Award of Excellence, the distinguished alumni recognition of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Teachers College. In addition to airports and airplanes, Milan spends as much time as possible trout fishing at a secret location in Wyoming he refuses to divulge!

## 5. Supplemental Readings & Resources

### The Secrets of Successful Communities

by Edward T. McMahon

From coast to coast, communities are struggling to answer these questions. After working in hundreds of communities in all regions of the country, I have come to some conclusions about why some communities succeed and others fail. There are many communities that have found ways to retain their small town values, historic character, scenic beauty and sense of community, yet sustain a prosperous economy. And they've done it without accepting the kind of cookie-cutter development that has turned many communities into faceless places that young people flee, tourists avoid and which no longer instill a sense of pride in residents.

Every "successful" community has its own strengths and weaknesses, but they all share some common characteristics. It's clear for instance that successful communities involve a broad cross-section of residents in determining and planning the future. They also capitalize on their distinctive assets — their architecture, history, natural surroundings, and home grown businesses — rather than trying to adopt a new and different identity.

Read More: [http://rural-design.org/sites/default/files/images/article\\_-\\_secrets\\_of\\_successful\\_communities\\_pcj\\_1.pdf](http://rural-design.org/sites/default/files/images/article_-_secrets_of_successful_communities_pcj_1.pdf)

### Variety in building size and age yields vibrant communities

Neighborhoods with small-scale historic buildings can be economic and cultural powerhouses when given a chance to survive and evolve.

by Edward T. McMahon

Why is it that neighborhoods with older, smaller buildings often seem more vibrant than those with larger, newer ones? Historic preservationists have long argued that older structures play a crucial role in contributing to the livability of cities and the health of local economies. Most preservationists are familiar with Jane Jacobs's book *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, in which she argues that large-scale demolition and replacement of older, smaller buildings with large new structures drains the life and vitality from urban neighborhoods.

Read more: [http://rural-design.org/sites/default/files/images/article\\_-\\_vibrant\\_communities\\_2014\\_1.pdf](http://rural-design.org/sites/default/files/images/article_-_vibrant_communities_2014_1.pdf)

## IAP2's Public Participation Toolbox

International Association for Public Participation (2006)

'Public participation' means to involve those who are affected by a decision in the decision-making process. It promotes sustainable decisions by providing participants with the information they need to be involved in a meaningful way, and it communicates to participants how their input affects the decision.

The practice of public participation might involve public meetings, surveys, open houses, workshops, polling, citizen's advisory committees and other forms of direct involvement with the public.

The International Association for Public Participation's (IAP2) mission is to advance and extend the practice of public participation.

IAP2 advocates on behalf of members and is building an international reputation for the public participation practice and profession. It supports international research and offers professional development training and services.

IAP2 members work in industry, civil society organisations, universities, government and more. They are involved in the public participation process by supporting clients, colleagues and citizens for improved decision-making.

Access the Toolbox: [http://rural-design.org/sites/default/files/images/iap2s\\_public\\_participation\\_toolbox.pdf](http://rural-design.org/sites/default/files/images/iap2s_public_participation_toolbox.pdf)

## An analysis of the effects of community leadership education program content on six outcome indices of community leadership

Godwin Apaliyaha & Kenneth E. Martin

This study examined the relationships between community leadership education program design and structure (contact hours and content) and six leadership outcome indices including personal growth and efficacy, community commitment, shared future and purpose, community knowledge, civic engagement, and social cohesion. Two different data-sets were used, one from an online study of participants of leadership programs in 20 counties in 5 states, and the other data-set came from an analysis of the leadership program design and curricula for the leadership programs. The results showed that more training contact hours in two of four content areas led to statistically significant gains in leadership outcome variables after controlling for the effects of other socio-demographic variables. Training content on individual leadership skills and knowledge had significant positive impacts on all six indices. The amount of time spent on public policy processes showed statistically significant gains for both shared future and purpose and community knowledge. However, hours spent on training participants on content areas related to community and community development processes had significant negative impacts on shared future and purpose and community knowledge. Group and teamwork did not produce significant results on any of the outcome indices.

Read More: [http://rural-design.org/sites/default/files/images/cds\\_journal\\_article\\_by\\_ken\\_martin\\_2013.pdf](http://rural-design.org/sites/default/files/images/cds_journal_article_by_ken_martin_2013.pdf)

## 6. Citizens' Institute on Rural Design™ Resources

### Resource Guide for Rural Planning and Design

The Resource Guide for Rural Planning and Design is a list of organizations in planning, housing, land use and natural resources, design, historic preservation, rural development, and funding that all serve as strong resources for communities and projects addressing development, design, and planning challenges. The document includes the contact information and website for each organization so that you can learn more about the resources they offer, and how these organizations may be able to help assist your community or design project.

**Read More:** <http://rural-design.org/resource/resource-guide-rural-planning-and-design>

### Glossary of Planning and Design Terms

The Citizens' Institute on Rural Design™ distributes this list of planning and design terms at our workshops so that community members of all backgrounds can understand the terms often used in design charrettes, and by architects, planners and designers. This glossary is helpful not only for participants at a workshop or charrette, but also for approaching any issue that affects the built environment.

**Read More:** <http://rural-design.org/resource/glossary-planning-design-terms>

# Appendix B: Workshop Notes

## KICK OFF MEETING – Town Introductions

Notes by David Cary

Eat dinner and have towns introduce themselves

\*very proud of towns!!

- Waverly – growing, housing, RR & highway, younger families, schools, attractive, recent plan adopted
- Hickman – growing, housing, subdivisions coming in, Theater, roads to and from town and issue, infrastructure
- Bennet – growing, housing, splash park, Community Foundation work on mural on old fire hall, 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration, watermelon race, farmers market
- Firth – not on the way to anywhere – have to want to go there. Not a lot of development within town. Settled on a Dutch community – small existing houses that are tough to sell & attract. Housing concern. Norris School District is a benefit, but not really the identity of Firth. Need to create community spirit with “acreage people” to be part of town. Grant for splash pad project. Master park plan. Some good restaurants (pasta sauce). Infrastructure in good shape (have done appreciative inquiry). About to get into marketing and branding.
- Panama – Community center; community library w/ police substation. BMX course. Active and progressive board. Trail grant. Santa sleigh tradition. 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration. Meat locker business. Want to have a restaurant/coffee shop. Old school building apartments needs something to happen – now owners want a mixed purpose building. Are a bedroom community, but don’t identify with the town on much. Want to update welcome sign to town.
- Hallam – Hallam Steakhouse, dairy. Tornado. That is a community challenge. Need to do it right. Rebuilding everything. Community Center built. Headstone for Potter’s Field. Heart on signs & water tower. Highest elevation in County. Need to fix RR tracks as launch pad for speeding. Need trees & sidewalks. Need to increase tax spending to fix eyesores. Some foreclosures. Need housing. Water quality issues. Infrastructure.
- Denton – kind of losing identity and don’t have a lot of people. Between Lincoln and Crete (school). Mostly the problem. Decent infrastructure. Downtown pretty well cleaned up. Car show. Denton Community Activities Committee. Excited about new trail project.

## **PLANNING PRESENTATION – Brandon Garrett**

Notes by David Cary

### **SESSION 1 (HICKMAN & HALLAM)**

Hickman – Do have a lot of activity in downtown but a lot of the old buildings are gone. Comp Plan is from 2007. Contract with JEO to update this year. Energy element is one area of discussion; more commercial; trails; recycling center; mixed use. Does need updating. Probably add a good statement about revitalizing downtown. Need to define what 68th will be like. How do you change character of an area when landlocked (RR & highway)? Maybe a workshop item for update.

Hallam – Plan updated in 2014. First one in 2011 as full overall w/2010 census data. Annual update. Surveys on goals used. Some variances to plan for projects, but really just trying to attract business and provide space/locations for them. Some hazardous items on Main Street from tornado still needs to be addressed. Discussed how might adopt building design standards. Should be discussed and then added to plan and then codify if decide to do this.

### **SESSION 2 (BENNET & FIRTH)**

Question on how often update the CP. Question about ETJ. Want executive summary of the CP to make more user friendly.

Bennet – ETJ: noted gravity flow sewer policy & how it will be a long time before respective, ETJ's will bump into each other. Beltway to be brought up. Interchange zoning status. Bennet is positioned to be its own city without Lincoln coming in & influencing

### **SESSION 3 (PANAMA, DENTON & WAVERLY)**

Waverly – Updated 2 years ago.

Denton – Been a long time since actually completed an update. Perhaps this is a first step for them.

Panama – Not sure when updated last.

Is there a place to go to help to start the process? Consultants & block grants available to do the work. Template available for easier updates (NPZA). Need a formal process to get busy in so stakeholders & public needs to drive the plan.

Trail map for tomorrow!!

Form based codes? Ed brought up.

## **PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SUCCESS STORIES – Milan Wall**

Notes by Jennifer Hiatt

### **SESSION 1 (DENTON, PANAMA & WAVERLY)**

Public Success Stories:

Waverly – Brainstormed ideas to help clean up park. Park Pride Pool Pass. Spend 8 hours helping clean up the parks. Cleaning up parks & gave kids a sense of ownership w/ the park. Local businesses donated to help the success of the project. Comp plan, involvement success. Got input from all stakeholders to ensure comp plan was all encompassing.

Panama – Community center; after they got the “yes”, people actively engaged in helping prepare the building; community gave books & shelves to create a library. Local businesses donated time and skills

Denton – Community clean-up day, got a lot of people involved

In Ashland, the right group got together to finally push Carnegie library project & turned it into a great community center.

Questions:

How do you give introvert space in duo/trio settings?

How do you record those moments?

### **SESSION 2 (HALLAM & HICKMAN)**

List of Resources for next time?

Questions:

Can you use the public participation tool-box be used in the work space as well

- Yes, good tool for all public use

Public Success Stories:

Hallam – Used the community center after the tornado to start the conversation about redevelopment. Had a Mexican dinner to engage conversation.

Hickman – Sent out flyers w/utility bills to get input on priority development. Mayor did a hotdog feed to open up conversations w/public about improvements. Uses Facebook to interact w/public

### **SESSION 3 (BENNET & FIRTH)**

Public Success Stories

Bennet – Community meetings for input & then organized committees to do the work - got a group of young people. Post office building was renovated w/public input because of common threat.

Arts Council – Omaha dog park was funded w/ grants that the community helped to get.

## PLACEMAKING AND THE POWER OF TEN – Cynthia Nikitin

Notes by Jordan Rasmussen

### SESSION 1 (BENNET & FIRTH)

What is placemaking?

#### FARMERS MARKET

- Surrounding it – health center, w/blood pressure checks
  - Community garden
  - Grocery store
- Co-location & clustering
- Activities use and space

#### PLACEMAKING OPPS – NH example

- Transportation
- Assets
  - What do people do in the area or at the location
  - Natural “hang outs” or make places for people to gather
  - Landmarks
- What are the problems? – parking
  - But goal was to address space problem
  - Experience places
  - Connecting places, linking
  - How to get people’s attention
- Parks
  - Low cost projects – focus on children activities – low costs
  - Farmers market & food trucks
  - Musical perform & reading time
- Squares – TX
  - Furnishings & programs
    - What would people do there?
- Libraries – Fort Meyers
  - Public space area informed the building
  - Programs just as important

What are the populations of some of these communities?

Government Buildings – Baltimore

Religious Institutions

- Must have multiple purposes ~ beyond religious institutions
- Think outside of your doors & connect them

Cultural Institutions

- Again connecting and acknowledging how institutions share constituents

Mixed-Use Districts

How to tie them together?

- A hospital, library and an art gallery
  - Took the leaders coming together to address needs

## POWER OF 10 EXERCISE

1. Consider the public space assets in your communities
2. List one to three new programs or activities that would help each become a great place destination
3. How can we link these places together visually, physically or programmatically?

*Just a note – I think the communities are a bit overwhelmed by this presentation – don't have the pieces – the businesses to start with – hard to scale some of the ideas down – or at least that is the perception*

Connecting the dots and the bigger picture

Give people ownership to bring activities to the park

## SESSION 2 (DENTON, PANAMA & WAVERLY)

What is placemaking?

- Stepping back from projects

Place – 10 things to do layered to create synergy

Destination – 10 places to go

City/Region – 10 destinations

Community/civic life – must have interactions to have

- What are people doing there and what will they need when they get there

## POWER OF 10 EXERCISE

- Self-programming

What 10 things can you do in this space?

- And in support of civic engagement

Identifying the problem

Create a series of activities to do together

Value of a first impression

- Capture attention and make people stop ~ not drive through

Kids programming brings parents

Series of activities in time as well as in space

Sharing of space and thinking outside of the walls

Being in the place you are planning

Odd partnership

- Parks
- Plazas/squares
- Creek
- Library
- Historic
- Schools
- Religious institutions
- Mainstreets
- Historic properties (as example)
- School - civic studies (ways to engage others)
- Newspaper
- Tours/map - adaptive reuse - events
- Oral history/inter - museum - coordination of ideas/events
- Partner w/history students
- Rebuilding a main street... in a dif. Location

Schools

- Converting
- Safe routes to school – have trouble getting funding

Health Community is willing to pay for things to keep health costs down

- Active transportation
- Developing farmers market
  - COMMUNITY HEALTH ENDOWMENT
    - Does this extend beyond Lincoln city limits

Movement away from walkable communities?

Joint applications

Hitting regulations and holds up of funding

Think of public institutions and their other uses, for the entire community – a school visit isn't only for school children, a fire hall can be an after school location (mentoring)

Get people thinking about promoting other businesses?

### **SESSION 3 (HALLAM & HICKMAN)**

#### **UNLIKELY PARTNERSHIPS**

main street

- mixed use dev.
- building front updates – but mngd by HS shop class – cost effic.
- farmers market
- empty lots – pop-up place/park

~ *quiet group*

# Appendix C: Participant List

## **BENNET**

Larry Hall  
Linda Jensen  
Barbara Johnson  
Bruce Johnson  
Doug Jose  
Ron Maas

## **DENTON**

Bill Edwards  
Diane Edwards  
Charlene Hobelman

## **FIRTH**

Helen Crunk  
Jill Hoefler  
Jarred Meyer  
Dave Rice

## **HALLAM**

Jessica Clark  
Cindy Heier  
Brad Niemeyer  
Vicky Polak  
Bruce Trautwein

## **HICKMAN**

Nancy Brandt  
Dr. Robert Brandt  
David Dykmann  
Sandy Faimon  
Heidi Hoglund  
Walter Nelson

## **PANAMA**

Charlotte Brotherson  
Shannon Filing  
Pam Pickard

## **WAVERLY**

Lonnie Burklund  
Justin Evertson  
Pamela Forster  
Robin Hoffman  
Cindy Miesbach  
Greg Rickers  
Doug Rix  
Mayor Mike Werner



# Appendix D: Links & Resources

## My Town, Lancaster County

Website [www.lincoln.ne.gov/city/plan/mytown](http://www.lincoln.ne.gov/city/plan/mytown)  
Town Resources [www.lincoln.ne.gov/city/plan/mytown/cird](http://www.lincoln.ne.gov/city/plan/mytown/cird)  
Facebook [www.facebook.com/mytownlanaster](http://www.facebook.com/mytownlanaster)

## Citizens' Institute on Rural Design –

Website [www.rural-design.org](http://www.rural-design.org)  
Resources [www.rural-design.org/resources](http://www.rural-design.org/resources)  
Research <https://drive.google.com/folderview?id=0B60dhObuCCdFclpFNHM1SjFqRUU&usp=sharing>

## Nebraska Community Foundation –

[www.nebcommfound.org](http://www.nebcommfound.org)

## Heartland Center for Leadership Development –

[heartlandcenter.info](http://heartlandcenter.info)

## USDA Rural Development Nebraska –

Website [www.rd.usda.gov/ne](http://www.rd.usda.gov/ne)  
You Tube on Home Ownership (English) [www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oq9Stli6\\_dl](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oq9Stli6_dl)  
You Tube on Home Ownership (Spanish) [www.youtube.com/watch?v=allLOQLaWNXI](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=allLOQLaWNXI)

## Neligh, NE –

Website [www.neligh.org](http://www.neligh.org)  
Facebook [www.facebook.com/cityofneligh](http://www.facebook.com/cityofneligh)  
Twitter [twitter.com/NelighNebraska](http://twitter.com/NelighNebraska)  
You Tube [www.youtube.com/channel/UCY9EHSlo2mez-GAXXqmAKhA](http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCY9EHSlo2mez-GAXXqmAKhA)  
Community Redevelopment Authority [www.neligh.org/work/cra](http://www.neligh.org/work/cra)

## Information on Nebraska's LB840 –

[www.neded.org/community/community-info/community-improvement/local-option-municipal-economic-development-act-lb840](http://www.neded.org/community/community-info/community-improvement/local-option-municipal-economic-development-act-lb840)

## Orton Family Foundation –

Resources [www.orton.org/resources](http://www.orton.org/resources)  
The Heart & Soul Webinar [www.orton.org/heart-soul-talks](http://www.orton.org/heart-soul-talks)

## Sherwood Foundation –

[www.sherwoodfoundation.org](http://www.sherwoodfoundation.org)

## Ed McMahon's TED Talk –

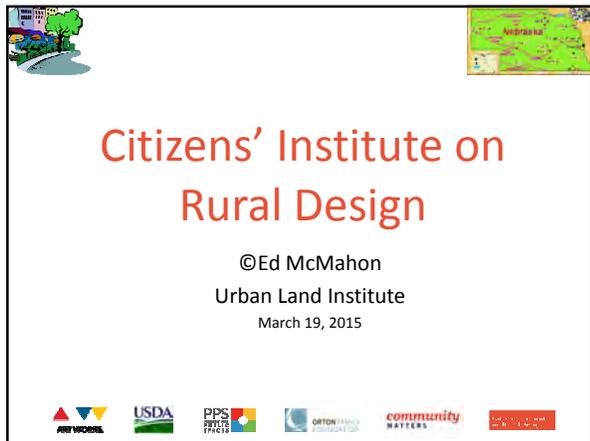
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=qB5tH4rt-x8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qB5tH4rt-x8)

## Don Macke's 10 Keys to Economic Success Booklet –

[www.energizingentrepreneurs.org/file\\_download/0f0de5de-3fd8-4718-810b-1a7c6437f791](http://www.energizingentrepreneurs.org/file_download/0f0de5de-3fd8-4718-810b-1a7c6437f791)



# Appendix E: Workshop Presentations



Citizens' Institute on  
Rural Design

©Ed McMahon  
Urban Land Institute  
March 19, 2015

Logos at the bottom include: ARIZONA, USDA, PPS SPACES, OYSTER FARMERS ASSOCIATION, community MATTERS, and a red logo.



There two kinds of change:

- **Planned change**
- **Unplanned change**



“The best way to predict the future is to create it yourself”

Abraham Lincoln

It is about our children



It's about balance

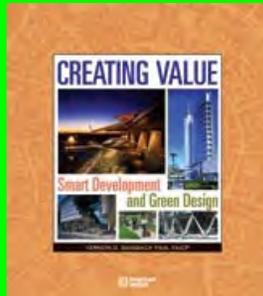


“Conservation is a state of harmony between man and nature.”

Aldo Leopold

## It's About Win-Win Solutions

- Healthy Environment
- Vigorous Economy
- Vibrant Community



## What is changing?

- National and global economy
- Demographics and population
- Technology
- Consumer attitudes & market trends
- Transportation modes and options
- Energy prices and sources
- The weather

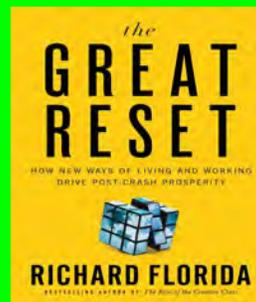
## Employment Changes



- The US saw a 34% decline in manufacturing jobs between 1990 and 2010.
- During the same period the US saw a 57% increase in professional and business service jobs, and
- An 81% increase in jobs in education and health services



## How will the Crash Reshape America?



- “How we live, work, shop and get around will change.”
- “Communities that embrace the future will prosper. Those that do not will decline.”

## Economic Development

### 20<sup>th</sup> Century Model

- Public sector leadership
- Shotgun recruitment strategy
- Low cost positioning
- Cheap labor
- Focus on what you don't have
- Quality of life unimportant
- Driven by transactions
- Key Infrastructure = Roads

### 21<sup>st</sup> Century Model

- Public/Private Partnerships
- Laser recruitment strategy
- High value positioning
- Highly trained talent
- Focus on what you do have
- Quality of life critical
- Driven by an overall vision
- Key Infrastructure = Education

## The One Big Thing Rarely Works?



Convention Centers



Festival Marketplaces

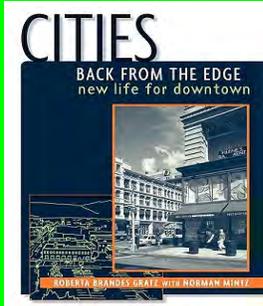


Casinos



Aquariums

## What works today?



“ Successful cities and towns think small in a big way.”

Roberta Brandes Gratz

“Communities and regions are in a global competition to attract and retain a talented workforce. Increasingly these talented workers are choosing where they want to live first and figuring out their job situations later.”

CEO's for Cities, Segmentation Study, 2006

## Global Competitiveness



- Communities compete in the new global economy
- Quality of life matters (cool places to live, work and play)
- Community character can differentiate
- Amenities and Affordability are both important

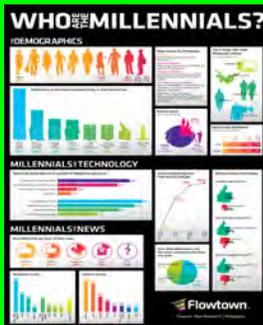
## Demographic Shifts



- Baby Boomers and Retirees – 80 million
- Immigrants – 40 million
- Millennials (18 to 32 year olds) – 85 million
- 26% of US households are made up of a single person
- 75 % of American households do not have school age children



## Young People



- Are getting married later or not at all
- Are postponing home ownership
- Own fewer cars and drive less
- Are concentrating in major metropolitan areas & cool towns
- Favor walkable neighborhoods
- Are adept with technology and social networking
- Are more tolerant
- Use social media to make buying decisions

## Technology & Globalization



- “The Death of Distance”
- People can do business anywhere
- Most new jobs are in small and medium sized businesses
- Health care & education
- Industrial recruitment is a small part of new economy

### Capital is Footloose



Foster Freiss



Jackson Hole, Wyoming



### Consumer attitudes are changing



**COVER STORY**

## Malls are like, totally uncool, say hip teens

The bigger question for retailers is, will parents follow their offspring?

By Bruce Horowitz  
USA TODAY

The future of retailing in America may all come down to where Jessica Pfeiffer shops. There's one place it's not: the mall.

Anyplace but the mall. For this 18-year-old high school senior and her 15-year-old sister, Andrea, the mall has become entirely uncool.

Most malls are filled with cubicles that all sell similar stuff. And many teens get the bushes-jewelry being followed around by walkie-talkie wielding security guards and suspicious store clerks who keep flashing them evil eyes.

The Pfeiffer sisters live in Manhattan and used to take the train to the mall. Now they and their friends who like

### Market Trends



- “It is becoming clear that homebuilders old one-size fits all marketing and product approach will not work for buyer groups whose interests & borrowing requirements differ widely, not only from buyers of the recent past, but also from each other.”
- Source: Builder Magazine, July 2009



### Different demographics want different types of housing



Retirees and Empty Nesters



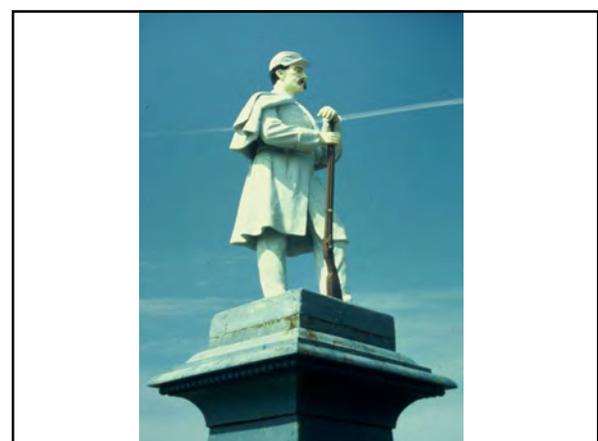
Immigrants



Gen Y



Single Women





**The Patterns of Development**

- Where you put development
- How you arrange development
- What development looks like



“Every community needs a long range conservation plan, just like it needs a long range transportation plan.”

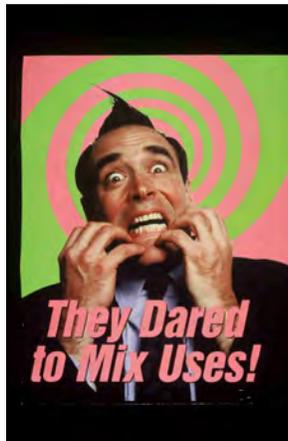


Boulder, Colorado – Greenbelt



Neighborhood Park – San Diego

When people can't see where they are going, they want to slam on the brakes



- How we arrange development

### Maryland Town



### Nebraska Town



### Seward, Nebraska



### Characteristics of a Town



- Edge & a center
- Mix of Uses and housing types
- Walkable & pedestrian friendly
- Architecturally coherent & interesting
- Strong sense of community & Place

### Sprawl



### Characteristics of Sprawl



- No edge & no center
- All uses are segregated
- Must drive everywhere for everything
- Architecturally chaotic & ugly
- No sense of place
- Hard to have a sense of community

Do we have any alternatives to sprawl that are more attractive, more efficient, more profitable?

### Growth is About Choices



Should we invest downtown?
Should we invest on the strip?

### Growth is About Choices



Should we spread out?
Should we grow more compactly?

### What does development look like?



### Community Character Matters!



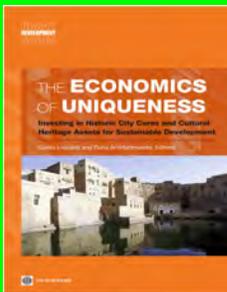
- "We take stock of a city like we take stock of a man. The clothes or appearance are the externals by which we judge."
- Mark Twain



COMMUNITY IMAGE IS CRITICAL TO ECONOMIC VITALITY AND QUALITY OF LIFE



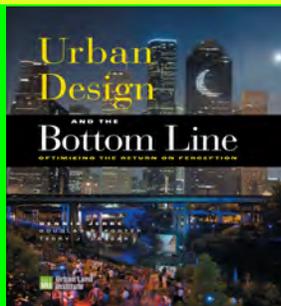
## Distinctiveness has value!



- "If you can't differentiate yourself, you will have no competitive advantage."
- "Sameness is a minus, not a plus in today's world."



## Green Space & Property Values



- "The relationship between rising property values and green spaces is well documented."
- "Some studies find as much as a 15 to 30 % increase in the value of properties adjacent to parks and open space."

## Where is the most valuable land in NY?





## Value of Open Space

- Developers build golf courses because golf courses sell real estate at premium prices
- Very expensive to design, build & maintain golf courses
- Parks and open spaces also sell real estate at premium prices at lower costs to create and maintain



What is the value of historic buildings, neighborhoods and landscapes?

It's About Value!



SECRETS OF SUCCESSFUL COMMUNITIES – Ed McMahon





Every Community Has Places Worth Preserving



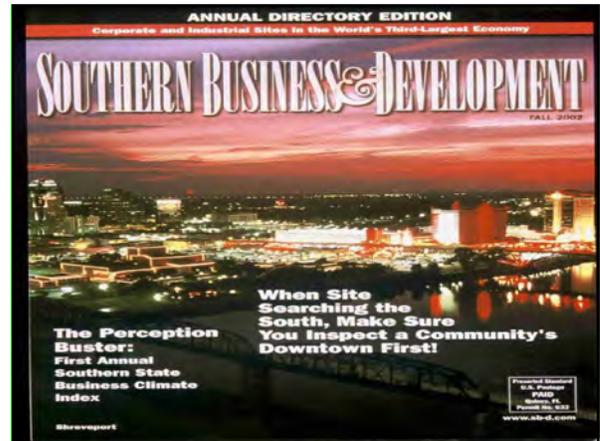
Lucy the Elephant, Margate , NJ

Willa Cather House, Red Cloud, NE

“Among cities and towns with no particular recreational appeal, those that preserve the past continue to enjoy tourism. Those that haven’t receive almost no tourism at all.

Tourists simply won’t go to a city or town that has lost its soul.”

Arthur Frommer



## Questions

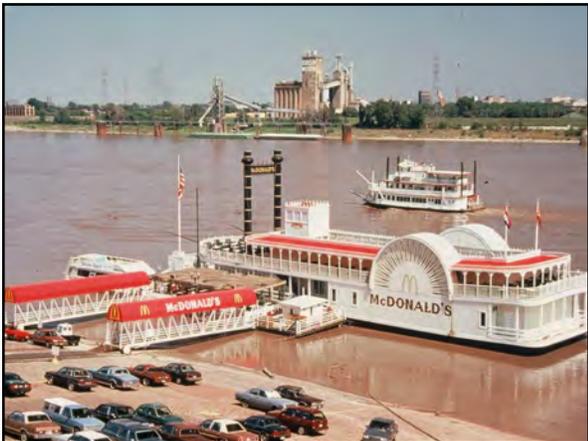
- Should new commercial buildings reflect your community and your region?

Or

- Should new commercial buildings look like "Anyplace USA"?



SECRETS OF SUCCESSFUL COMMUNITIES – Ed McMahon



## You Have a Choice!

“When a chain store developer come to town they generally have three designs (A, B, or C) ranging from Anywhere USA to Unique (sensitive to local character).”

“Which one gets built depends heavily upon how much push back the company gets from local residents and officials about design & its importance.”

Source: Bob Gibbs, Retail Consultant, Birmingham, MI



## Walgreens – Plan A



## Walgreens – Plan B



Walgreens – Plan C



Walgreens – Plan C



Walgreens - Plan C



### Better Building Techniques

- Architectural Design Review
- Corridor Overlays
- **Leverage**
- **Architectural Design Guidelines**
- **Form Based Codes**
- **Education & Awards**
- **Just Ask**

Burger King - Proposed



Burger King - Built



Super 8 Motel - Proposed



Super 8 Motel - Built



CVS - Proposed



CVS - Built



The Old Paradigm



The New Paradigm

The 2014 Great American Main Street Award Semifinalists

- The future belongs to main streets, town centers and mixed use development!
- Strip development is development for the last century!

## Here is Why:

- We're overbuilt on the strip
- Retail is rediscovering cities & towns
- The suburbs are being redesigned
- Traffic congestion, fuel prices and auto-oriented (i.e. ugly design) are undermining the strip
- Consumers favor places with character
- E-commerce means fewer and smaller stores
- The economy is restructuring the retail landscape

## We're Overbuilt on the Strip



- Ten fold increase in retail space from 1960-2000.
- From 4 to 38 square feet per person.
- US has more than double the retail space per person as Europe.
- There is now more than 1 billion sq. ft. of vacant retail space (mostly in empty big box stores)

## Retail space grew 5x faster than retail sales



The New York Times Business

### Our Love Affair With Malls Is on the Rocks





- No new malls , since 2006
- 10% of existing malls have closed
- 30% of existing malls being repositioned
- 1 Billion square feet of vacant retail space

## Mall to Town, Lakewood, CO



Villa Italia Mall

→



Belmar Town Center

### Downtown Rockville, MD



- Mostly demolished in 1970



### Replaced by Rockville Mall



### Rockville Town Center



The New Promised Land?

### Tear Up Parking Lot, Rebuild Paradise

- Large, flat, well drained site
- Major infrastructure in place
- 4 lane highway frontage, transit ready
- Saves rural land
- Committed to mixed use
- Can turn NIMBY's into YIMBY's
- 2.8 million acres of greyfields will be available in next 15 years

We Can Have This:



Spread Out  
Single Use  
Drivable Only



“Downtown Waffle House  
outperforms Strip Waffle House  
by 15%”

Source: City of Fayetteville and ISR Working Group  
September 22, 2011

The downtown, mixed use project also produces:

- More taxes per acre
- More jobs per acre
- More residents per acre
- More people walk to the restaurant



“People stay longer, spend more money and come back more often to places that attract their affection.”

*Source: Urban Design and the Bottom Line, ULI, 2009*

## Secrets of Successful Communities

1. Develop a shared vision for the future
2. Inventory local and regional assets
3. Build plans around the enhancement of assets
4. Use education, incentives, partnerships, and voluntary initiatives, not just regulation
5. Pick and choose among development proposals
6. Cooperate with neighbors for mutual benefit
7. Protect community character as well as ecology and economics
8. Have strong leaders and committed citizens

## Most Polluted City



## Model for Community Revitalization



## Downtown Chattanooga Before





Tennessee River

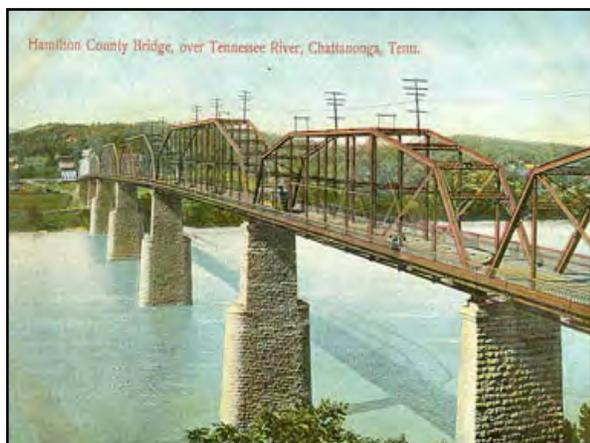


Tennessee River Gorge

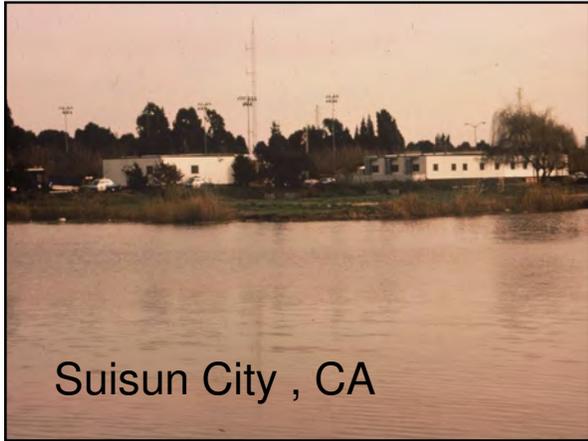


Tennessee River Park

- "The initial segment of the Tennessee River Park has become the most loved and used park in Hamilton County."
- "More than 1 million people of all ages, races and economic status use the park annually."
- "The 13 mile river walk has generated almost \$1 Billion in private development adjacent to the trail."
- Source: City of Chattanooga



SECRETS OF SUCCESSFUL COMMUNITIES – Ed McMahon



Suisun City , CA



SECRETS OF SUCCESSFUL COMMUNITIES – Ed McMahon





## Inventory Assets

- Natural Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Human Resources
- Economic Resources
- Educational Resources

Sometimes the Assets are Obvious



Sometimes They Are Not Obvious



Columbus Riverfront - Before



Columbus Riverfront - After



WWII Torpedo Factory



Torpedo Factory Arts Center



Rapid City, SD - Before



Rapid City, SD - After



Flood Wall – Before



Flood Wall Murals



High Bridge – Poughkeepsie, NY



Rail Bridge - Before



Rail Bridge - After



### Explore Beyond Regulation

- Education
- Incentives
- Partnerships
- Voluntary Initiatives



### Lowertown Arts District



- What do you do about crime, drugs and abandoned houses?
- In Paducah, Kentucky you sell abandoned houses to artists for \$1.
- In 10 years, Lowertown Paducah was transformed from a decaying slum to an artist District with 100 restored buildings, 70 artist studios and \$40 million in private investment.





SUCCESSFUL  
COMMUNITIES PICK  
AND CHOOSE AMONG  
DEVELOPMENT  
PROPOSALS

Hometown Heroes

“Never doubt that a small group of committed individuals can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has”

-Margaret Mead



Leadership is important  
But often unappreciated

“Apart from sanitation, medicine, education, wine, public order, roads, irrigation, public health and a freshwater system, what have the Romans ever done for us?”  
Monty Python's, Life of Brian

A Final Thought

Vision counts, but  
implementation is  
priceless!

# Thank You!

Ed McMahon  
emcmahon@uli.org

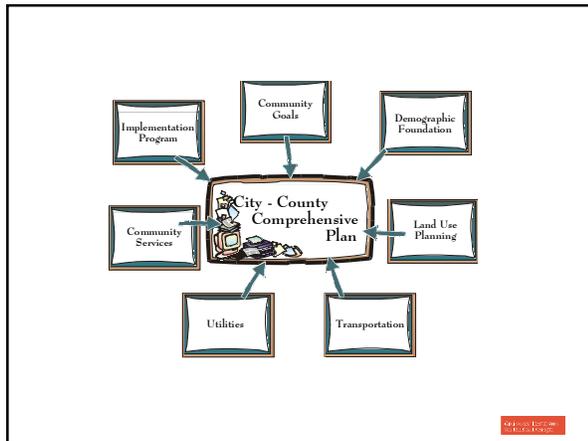


# Comprehensive Plans & Zoning

Brandon Garrett & Paul Barnes  
March 20, 2015

## WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

- The Community's **VISION** for its future (about 30 years)
- Outlines where, how, and when the community wishes to grow
- Basis for capital programming, zoning, and subarea plans
- Defines role played by existing neighborhoods, employment centers, and institutions



### ... The Comp Plan reflects community's investment in ... **Public Services**

- Public Utilities (water, wastewater, storm-water, and waste materials)
- Streets, Roads, and Highways
- Other Transportation Modes
- Parks & Recreation, including Trails
- Public Safety Services
- Educational Institutions
- Environmental Resources
- Energy Services
- Libraries

### ... as well as the community's investment in ... **Private Growth**

- Office Development
- Shopping Centers and Retailing
- Industrial Uses
- Residential Development
- Religious Facilities
- Education
- Recreation

### Long Range Transportation Plan

- Pedestrians
- Bicyclists
- Public Transit
- Streets & Highways

### Why Plan?

- Protect Public Health, Safety, and Welfare
- Define Community Interest and Goals
- Encourage Economic Development
- Efficient Use of Human Resources
- Efficient Use of Financial Resources
- Proper Use of Natural & Cultural Resources
- Enhance Community Appearance
- Equitable Provision of Services
- Information for Better Decisions



### What is zoning?



### Zoning is...

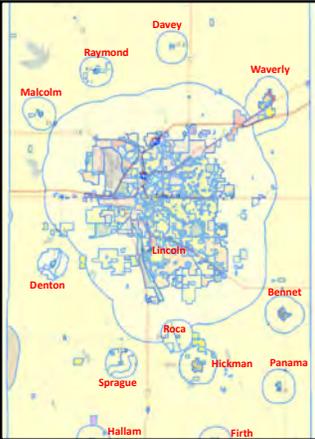
Implementation of a comprehensive plan.  
 A set of adopted regulations that separates land uses by categories.  
 A set of development regulations (setbacks, height limits, minimum lot sizes, parking requirements, sign regulations etc.)  
 A planning tool that considers the character of the district.  
 A document that helps bring about orderly growth and change.

### Zoning is not...

A building code – this governs the safety and structure of buildings.  
 A subdivision ordinance – this governs how property is divided into pieces and improvements are installed.



### Lincoln/Lancaster County Zoning Map



A Zoning Map is a visual representation of a jurisdiction's zoning districts (left).

An Extraterritorial Zoning Jurisdiction is land beyond an incorporated community's limits where the community has authority to enforce zoning laws (by State statute).  
 Lincoln – 3 mile  
 Villages – 1 mile

Lancaster County Jurisdiction:  
 Everything else



## Zoning Regulations

**Questions you should be asking with regard to zoning**

- What is the zoning district for this property and what does it mean?
- What can a person do on this property?(e.g. single family, multifamily, office, commercial, industrial, agriculture)
- How large and how tall can the buildings be?
- How far back from property lines must the buildings set?
- How much parking is required?
- What signage is permitted?

**How do I find the answers to these questions?**

- Review the Village Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance
- Contact your Village Clerk or Village Board member



## Zoning Impacts on Development




## BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

- **Planning Commission** The Planning Commission is charged by state and local law with advising the City Council (or Village Board) and County Board on a variety of planning and development matters.
- **City Council** The Planning Commission is charged by state and local law with advising the City Council (or Village Board) and County Board on a variety of planning and development matters.
- **Village Board** The Village Board is a governing body for the local jurisdiction.
- **County Board** The County Board is represented by 5 districts with one member elected from each district.

Notes: All boards and commissions operate under the Nebraska Open Meetings Act ([Neb. Rev Stat. 84-1407 to 84-1414](#)).



# Public Engagement

Milan Wall  
March 20, 2015



## Foundations of Public Engagement



## CDS Principles of Good Practice

- Promote active participation
- Engage people in understanding issues
- Incorporate diverse interests and cultures
- Enhance leadership capacity
- Work toward sustainability



## IAP2's Engagement Spectrum

- Inform: Provide you with information
- Consult: Listen to you
- Involve: Ensure that your ideas are included
- Collaborate: Work together to find solutions
- Empower: Implement what you decide



## Public Engagement Experience



## Think about a Public Engagement Success

What was the success?  
What made it successful?



### Heartland Center's Rules for Successful Public Engagement

- Seat people at round or rectangular tables
- Use small group activities extensively
- Provide space for introverts
- Display participants' input
- Report out small group contributions
- Provide food or refreshments
- Start on time and end early



### Characteristics of Effective Groups

- Serious contributions are not ignored
- Members check on meaning
- Each member speaks for herself/himself
- Contributions belong to the group



### Characteristics of Effective Groups

- Members participate in different ways
- The group explores what's behind difficulty in getting things done
- The group accepts responsibility for what it does
- Conflict is brought into the open and dealt with



### Strategies for Maintaining Momentum



### Strategies for Maintaining Momentum

- Focus on the Ultimate Objective
- Keep Communication Lines Open
- Involve Others Meaningfully
- Engender Widespread Ownership
- Recognize and Reward Efforts



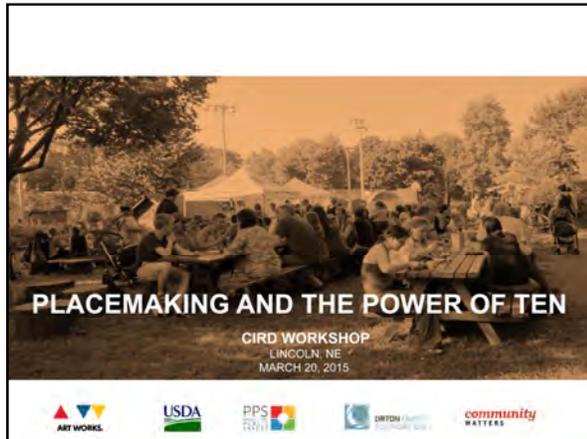
### Strategies for Maintaining Momentum

- Produce Visible Results
- Keep Selling Benefits
- Focus on Commonalities, Not Differences
- Practice Patience and Tolerance
- Have Some Fun



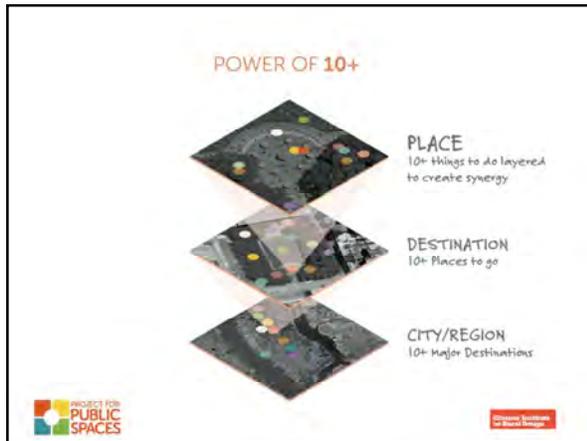
PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT – Milan Wall





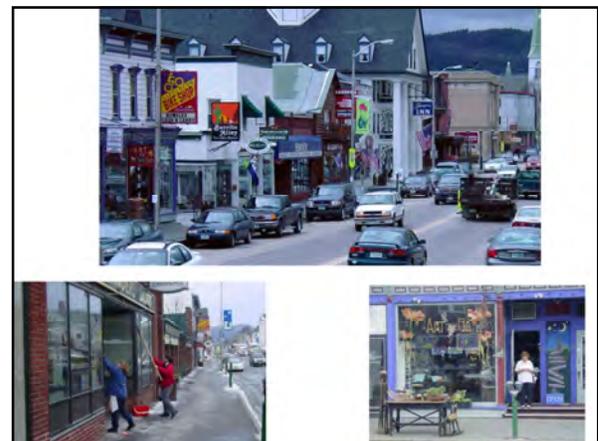
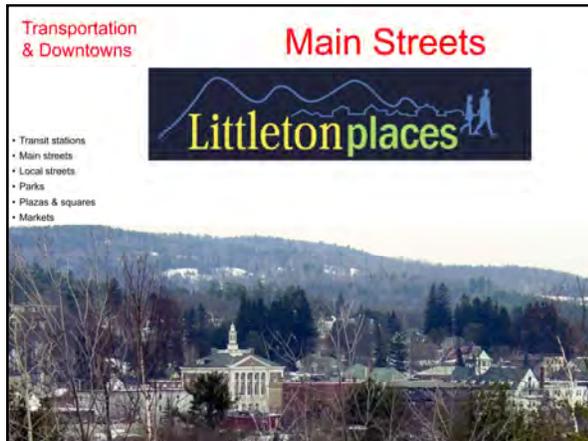
## WHAT IS PLACEMAKING?

Placemaking is a movement that reimagines public space as the heart of every community. Rooted in community-based participation, Placemaking involves the planning, design, management and programming of public spaces and capitalizes on a community's assets and potential to create vibrant destinations—such as neighborhood gardens, community markets, and downtown squares. For the past 40 years, Placemaking has spurred social, economic, and environmental benefits to communities around the world.

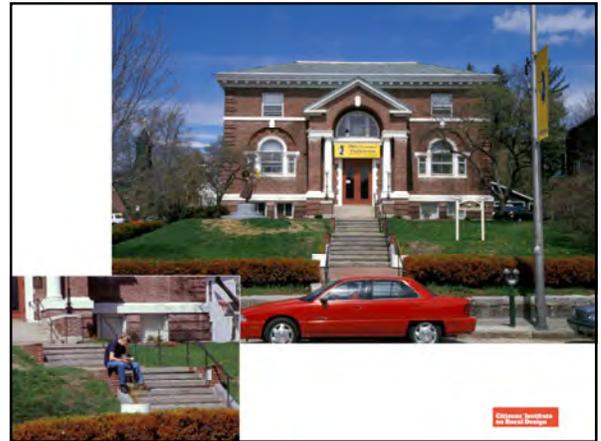




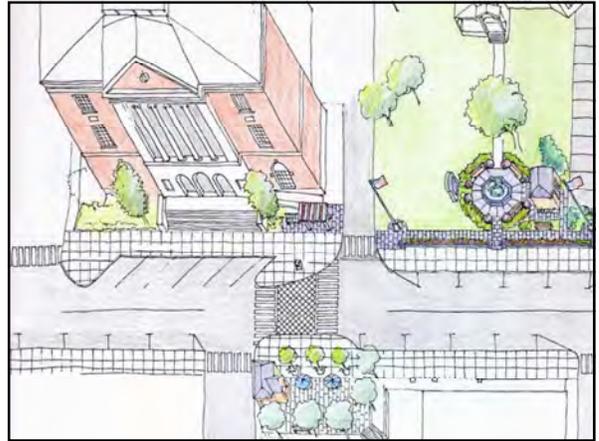
Placemaking Opportunities	
Transportation & Downtowns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bus stops/Train Stations</li> <li>• Main Streets (outdoor displays, streetscapes, cafés)</li> <li>• Local streets and roads</li> </ul>
Parks & Squares	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parks (greenways, recreation, play areas)</li> <li>• Plazas &amp; squares (performances, events)</li> <li>• Markets</li> <li>• Waterfronts</li> </ul>
Civic Institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Libraries and hospitals</li> <li>• Civic buildings</li> <li>• Schools (universities, primary schools)</li> <li>• Religious institutions</li> <li>• Cultural institutions (theaters, museums)</li> </ul>
Private Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mixed-use – housing, retail and office</li> </ul>



PLACEMAKING – Cynthia Nikitin



PLACEMAKING – Cynthia Nikitin



PLACEMAKING – Cynthia Nikitin



**Parks & Squares**

**Parks**

- Bus stations
- Main streets
- Local streets
- Parks
- Plazas & squares
- Markets
- Waterfronts
- Libraries & hospitals
- Civic buildings
- Schools
- Religious institutions
- Cultural institutions
- Mixed-use

Cynthia Nikitin  
of Terra Design



Cynthia Nikitin  
of Terra Design

PLACEMAKING – Cynthia Nikitin

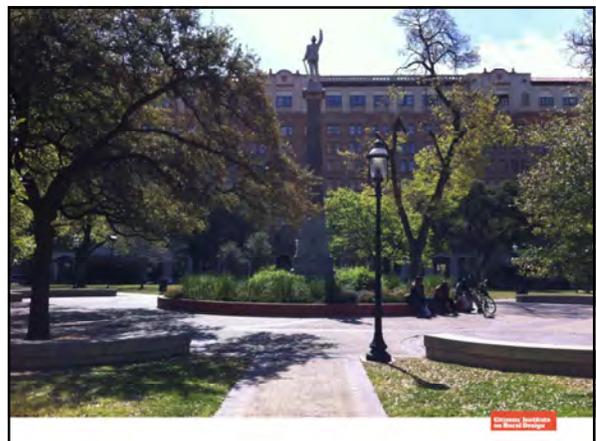


**Parks & Squares**

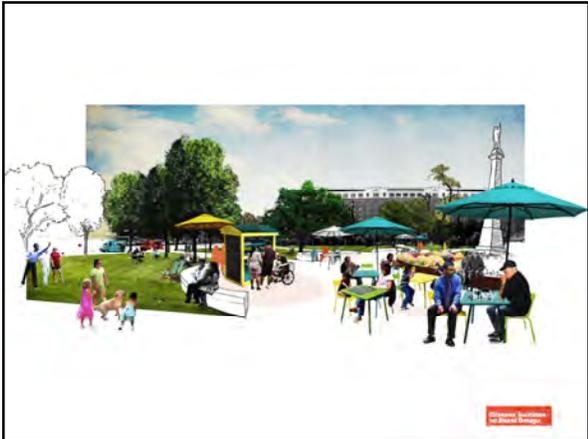
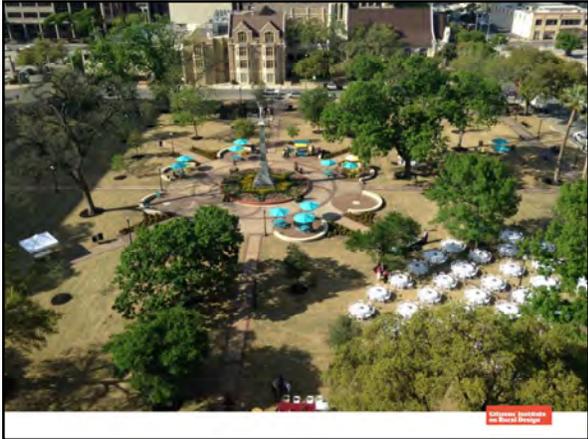
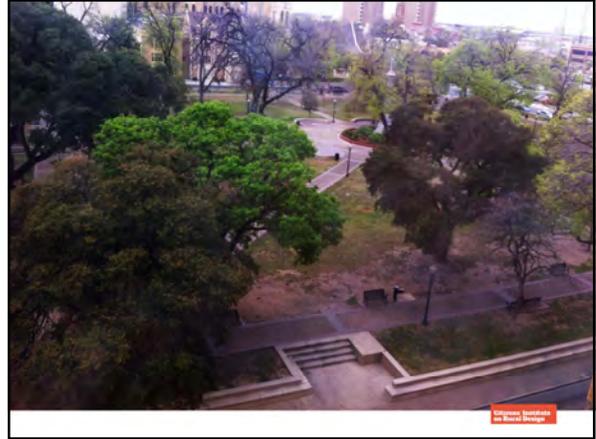
**Squares**

- Bus stations
- Main streets
- Local streets
- Parks
- Plazas & squares
- Markets
- Waterfronts
- Libraries & hospitals
- Civic buildings
- Schools
- Religious institutions
- Cultural institutions
- Mixed-use

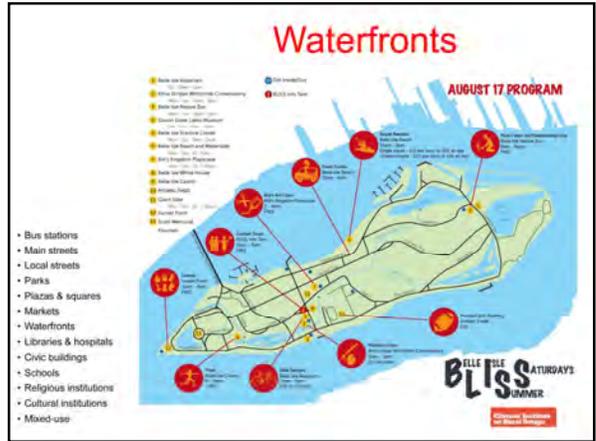
**San Antonio: Travis Park: Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper**



PLACEMAKING – Cynthia Nikitin



PLACEMAKING – Cynthia Nikitin



Detroit: Belle Isle -- Yoga Classes

Detroit: Belle Isle -- Kayak Rentals

PLACEMAKING – Cynthia Nikitin



Detroit: Belle Isle -- Info Tent

City of Detroit  
Department of Public Works



Detroit: Belle Isle – Children's Programming

City of Detroit  
Department of Public Works



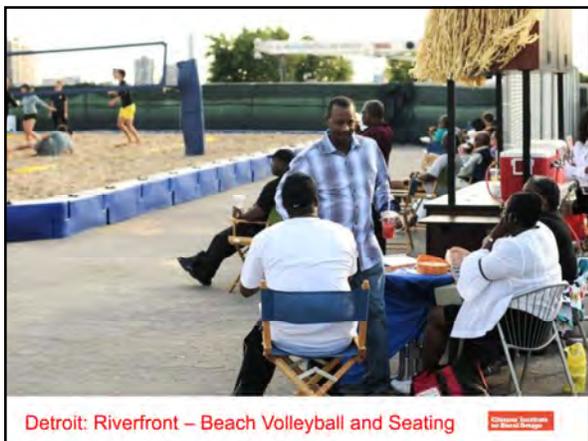
Detroit: Belle Isle -- Food Trucks and Bike Rental

City of Detroit  
Department of Public Works



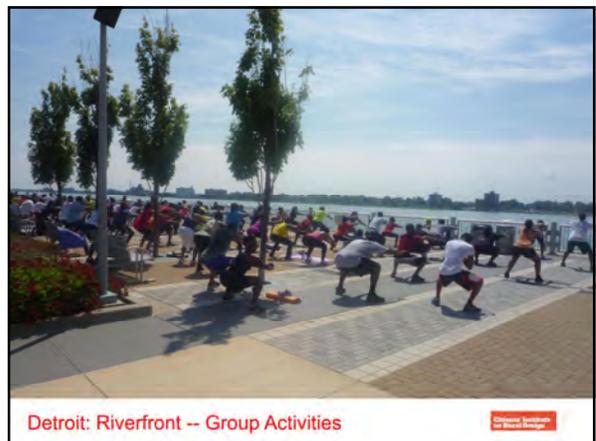
Detroit: Belle Isle – Beer Garden

City of Detroit  
Department of Public Works



Detroit: Riverfront – Beach Volleyball and Seating

City of Detroit  
Department of Public Works



Detroit: Riverfront -- Group Activities

City of Detroit  
Department of Public Works

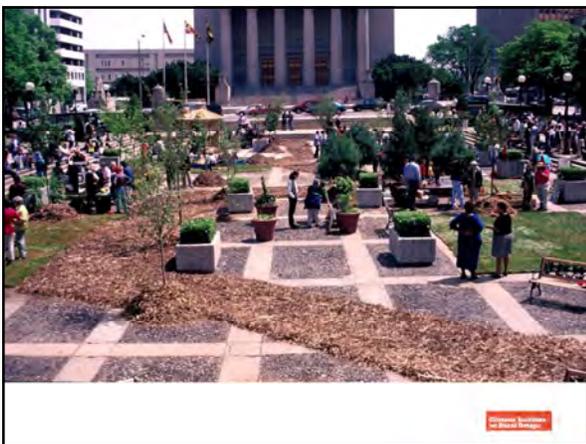


PLACEMAKING – Cynthia Nikitin

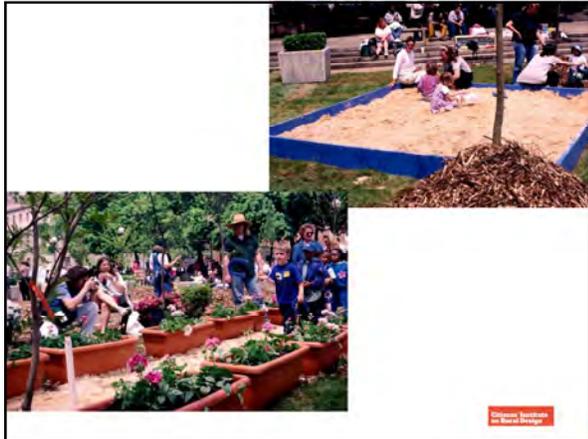


<p><b>Storytimes</b></p> <p>You Are My Sunshine, My Only Sunshine</p>	<p><b>Edible Book Contest</b></p> <p>Dr. Seuss vs. The Pokey Little Puppy</p>
<p><b>Musical Discovery Zones</b></p> <p>More than 100 in attendance</p>	<p><b>Symphony Previews</b></p> <p>Lunchtime Events For the Downtown Community</p>

<p><b>Civic Institutions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bus stations</li> <li>• Main streets</li> <li>• Local streets</li> <li>• Parks</li> <li>• Plazas &amp; squares</li> <li>• Markets</li> <li>• Waterfronts</li> <li>• Libraries &amp; hospitals</li> <li>• Civic buildings</li> <li>• Religious institutions</li> <li>• Cultural institutions</li> <li>• Mixed-use</li> </ul>	<p><b>Government Buildings</b></p> <p><small>Citizens' Feedback on Street Design</small></p>
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# PLACEMAKING – Cynthia Nikitin



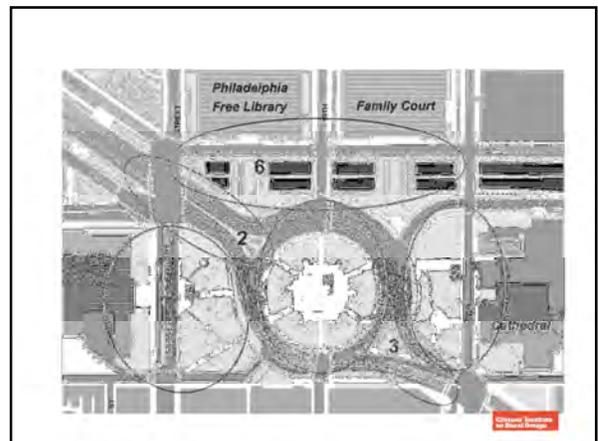
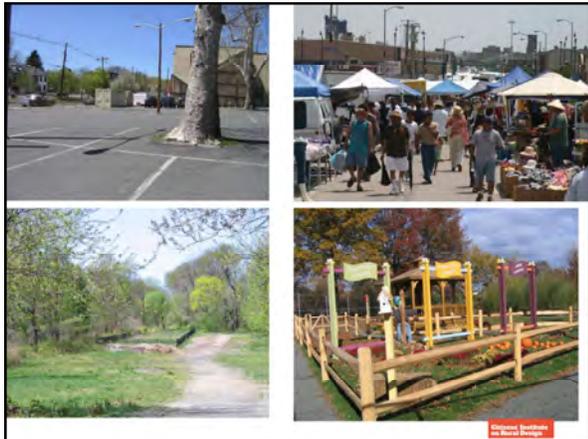
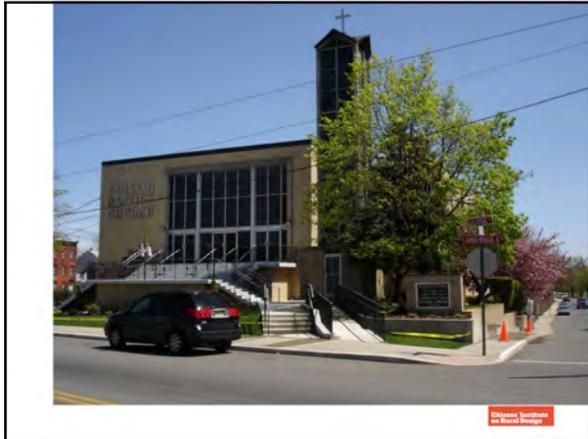
## Religious Institutions

- Bus stations
- Main streets
- Local streets
- Parks
- Plazas & squares
- Markets
- Waterfronts
- Libraries & hospitals
- Civic buildings
- Schools
- Religious institutions
- Cultural institutions
- Mixed-use

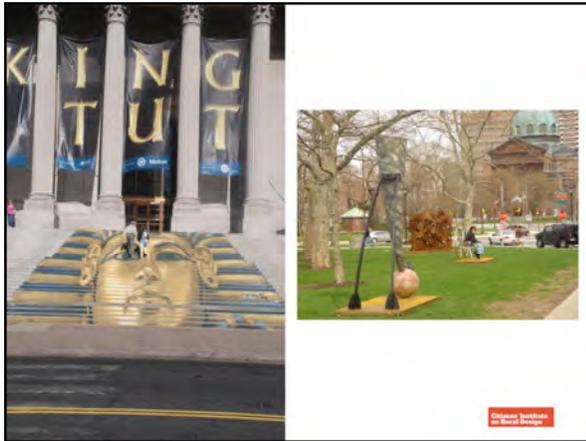




# PLACEMAKING – Cynthia Nikitin



# PLACEMAKING – Cynthia Nikitin



**Development**

## Mixed-Use Districts

- Bus stations
- Main streets
- Local streets
- Parks
- Plazas & squares
- Markets
- Waterfronts
- Libraries & hospitals
- Civic buildings
- Schools
- Religious institutions
- Cultural institutions





### Power of Ten Exercise

1. Consider the public space assets in your Communities
  - Bus stops/Transit Stations
  - Main Streets
  - Parks
  - Plazas & squares
  - Markets
  - Waterfronts
  - Libraries and Hospitals
  - Civic buildings/Historic Properties
  - Schools (universities, primary schools)
  - Religious institutions
  - Cultural institutions (Theaters, museums)
  - Mixed-use developments
2. List one to three new programs or activities that would help each become a great place destination.
3. How can we link these places together visually, physically, or programmatically?

Community Squares and Shared Spaces

### Stay in Touch!

**PROJECT FOR PUBLIC SPACES**

[pps.org](http://pps.org) (read our blog, subscribe to our free newsletter)

@PPS\_Placemaking

[facebook.com/ProjectforPublicSpaces](https://facebook.com/ProjectforPublicSpaces)

PPS\_Placemaking

Community Squares and Shared Spaces



## Ashland ECAP Process

Shirley Niemeyer  
March, 2013








## Community process

1. What led to Ashland's participation in ECAP – how became involved in ECAP process
2. Getting input from residents
3. Steps have gone through
4. Building a framework for moving forward
5. Outcomes
6. Where ECAP will lead us in the future
7. Being a possibilitarian




## Become a possibilitarian

- › possible – capable of making happen
- › *"Become a possibilitarian. No matter how dark things seem to be or actually are, raise your sights and see possibilities. Always see them, for they're always there."*  
--Norman Vincent Peale

ASTORHIMM City Andeviken's application for its aerospace training program 15 times before being accepted and flying in Space.



## Entrepreneurial Community Activation Process

- › ECAP helps communities understand . . .
  - unique characteristics
  - community assets
  - potential opportunities for growth








## Program

- › ECAP –a product of University of Nebraska - Lincoln Extension Entrepreneurship Team

Charlotte Narjes, coordinator  
Diane Vigna, coordinator

- Milan Wall, evaluation
- › Funded by Rural Futures Institute





## Purpose of ECAP

- › Help Nebraska communities . . .
  - Visionary thinking
  - Entrepreneurial leadership
  - Build relationships
  - Increase ability to leverage resources
  - Attract & retain a working age population
  - Empower community economic growth
- › Help communities chart path to becoming more entrepreneurial




### 8 characteristics of communities that contribute to positive entrepreneurial community

- Community Vision ✓
- Culture of Change ✓
- Digitally Connected
- Education/Workforce IQ
- Entrepreneurial Support Systems
- Infrastructure ✓
- Leadership
- Sense of Place



Entrepreneur Standards for Smart Design

### UNL's Extension's role...

- UNL can . . .
  - Facilitate a deeper conversation
  - Assist with creation of **action plans**
  - Provide educational programs & workshops
  - Be involved if **community does their part**
  - **Help understand** unique characteristics, community assets, & potential opportunities

Entrepreneur Standards for Smart Design

### Location – Location

#### • Ashland benefits

- Proximity to I-80 & Omaha & Lincoln
- Railroad
- Platte River
- Retains a rural character
- Near several parks & recreation, golf
- Several historic structures, features, art and wine
- Water

Entrepreneur Standards for Smart Design

### Characteristics . . .

- Population – 2012 est. 2,492
- ~ About 4000 people in school district area
- 951 households
- Bedroom community
- Retail & service “pull factor” from Lincoln & Omaha



Entrepreneur Standards for Smart Design

### Challenges

- Former **flooding**
- **Image**
- Water & sewage **rates higher** –
  - added water tower & new sewage treatment plant
- Cities nearby wanted **dam on Platte** which would have flooded Ashland & surrounding area – proposed many times since 1930s
  - Not likely to be proposed again
- **Funding** for infrastructure & improvements
- **Lack economic development office/professional**



Entrepreneur Standards for Smart Design

### 1. Led up to Involvement in ECAP?

- Contacted by UNL Extension – 1 of 4 pilot communities – grant & research
- 2 UNL professionals presented at **Chamber meeting & approved**
- **Chamber** asked **Rotary & Ashland Historic Society** to also “**sponsor**” & provide a vol. for **1st steering committee**. +vol. **student, teacher, business, & community** – for total of 7
- Various ages, diverse connections, not normally work together



1<sup>st</sup> Steering Committee Meeting

Entrepreneur Standards for Smart Design

## Involvement

- Media:
  - Ashland Gazette newspaper
  - Signs
  - Emails, Face book
  - Posters, Fliers
  - Announcements
  - Personal contacts
- Steering Committee
- Leaders at 1<sup>st</sup> community meeting...
  - Contacted most organizations, churches, fire dept., rescue squad, Am. Legion, VFW, City Council, etc.
  - Asked to send a representative to a community meeting to explain process & ask them to help invite people to join the ECAP process & fill out survey
  - Individuals – invited via email, direct, calls etc.

## 2. Input from community

- 4 Community Meetings: Range from ~55 to 28 people
  - sign in with email/phone
- Variety of ages & interests
- City council members & mayor at meetings & working with work groups
- State Senator
- Surveys: 468 returned
  - Instrument from UNL & steering committee added questions.
  - Media: Posters, Face book, e-mail, fliers on cars, announcements, lakes, etc.
  - Hardcopy in 5 locations
    - Web based & location on-site during Stir-Up

## 3. Building Framework

### 4 Initial Meetings

- Steering committee meets monthly
  - Reports from working groups – liaison
  - Plan quarterly meetings, agenda, etc.
- Aug. 4 – Surveys due
  - UNL summarized for Aug. 11 meeting
- July 28 – Community Vision Conversation (positive)
  - What do you like about living in Ashland?
  - What do you believe are Ashland's strengths?
  - Values?
  - Input recorded in small groups – provided for all

## 3. Building Framework

### 4 Initial Meetings

- Aug. 11 – Discovery Tool Results (survey) provided – encouraged conversations
  - UNL presented results, handouts, etc.
  - 18 pgs., 79 pgs. (charts, summary comments)
  - All comments – 118 pages – could have copy pickup if needed

## 3. Building Framework

### 4 Initial Meetings

- August 25 – Prioritization short & long term goals
  - Set up working groups around 8 characteristics
  - Resulted in 5 working groups
- September 8 – Next Steps Towards Action
  - Working groups completed plans – reported plans
  - All recorded on flip charts & planning sheets
- Oct. forward – working group meetings, quarterly all member meetings
- Jan. quarterly meeting, reports from working groups

## Beginning Prioritization –

- Identified short & long term goals around characteristics and refined.

### Community Meetings

- Agenda planned with UNL & steering committee
- Participants requested continuing quarterly community meetings
- Broke into working groups focused on the 8 characteristics




### Community Meetings

- Out of those working groups came 5 on-going working groups focused on:
  - Entrepreneur Support & Ec. Development**
    - Ec. Development Corp. Board to form a 501c3 formal organization with members & to attract funding.
    - Hire an Ec. Development professional & est. office
    - City put forth some dollars for position




### ECAP Working Groups

#### 2. Recreation & Parks

- Short-term:
  - Splash pool – meetings with City Council rep.,
  - Will meet with splash pool professional about design, costs etc.
- Long term – new city pool




### ECAP Working Groups

#### 3. Infrastructure

- Short – term: Bypass route for heavy trucks – met with state roads dept. State controls highway
- Long-term: Expanded trail routes – long term
  - Challenges: Landownership/farms
- Sidewalks





#### 4. Culture of Change/Vision

- Short-term: Adopt vision
- Met several times to propose vision at quarterly meeting

**Vision:** *Ashland is a community where you want to live your life, build your business, and raise your family. We share in the vision of keeping the best of our past while striving toward a prosperous future* – ECAP & City Council rep.

- Draft of strategic plan





#### 5. Arts & Theater working group

- Long-term: Public-private performing arts theater – school/community
- Short-term:
  - Arts & wine festival
  - Performances
  - Education







### Differences by Age Statistically significant

- Older persons more likely than younger to rate following projects as high priority
  - Welcome signage
  - Improve Hwy 6 appearance
  - Downtown maintenance & improvement
  - Restoration of historic St. Stephen's Church
  - Towers of History
  - Parking for RVs/buses.
  - Development of land & space for commercial & retail dev.
  - Making water/sewer rates more affordable
  - Reroute through truck traffic.
- Persons age 21 to 64 more likely than younger & older persons to rate swimming pool upgrade & development of more trails & parks as high priority



### Differences by Age Statistically significant

- Persons age 21–39 most likely to rate improving the playgrounds as high priority.
- Young persons (under the age of 21) are more likely than older persons to rate these items as high priority:
  - Soccer fields
  - Theatre arts/auditorium
  - Ball park complex completion
  - Remodel Carnegie Library for Ashland Area
  - Historic Society



### What is happening? Outcomes

- Working groups continue to meet
- Working with City & Chamber to purchase equipment for business district free WiFi
- City & Chamber budgeted partial dollars to obtain half or full time Ec. Dev. Professional – City put forth ~ ¼ time new hire.
- Legal papers being developed to move forward on an Ec. Dev. Corporation
- Meeting with professional about costs & ideas for splash pad, developing a donor marketing flyer
- Historical Society org. volunteers to scrape & paint historic St. Stephens Church



### What is happening – Outcomes

- City approved Historical Soc. moving to old historic Carnegie Library
- Community, Chamber & City Council moving forward as one entity – more communication
  - Chamber & City working on new Ashland Website
- Sense of we can do – understanding of what community has & what may need for future.
- Different, new, & young people involved in working groups
- Conversations – asking about projects, ECAP etc.



### Evaluation

"I have seen a handful of different projects that have taken place in Ashland over the years, but nothing like ECAP. ...this process brought some of the same players who are always involved in community projects, but also new people to the table. That was refreshing ...it seemed in the past that it is always the same people involved in projects, sometimes just because no one else will. New people bring fresh ideas & perspective.

I also see a new sense of excitement in those "old guard" people, the ones who are always involved. Their interest & involvement in the community seems to be renewed by the ECAP process.

The ECAP process seems to be sparking movement in Ashland towards a positive end. I see people who are invested in moving the community forward in terms of economic development, attracting new residents to the community, providing support for existing businesses & expanding the present arts community in new & exciting ways. I definitely think the ECAP process will bring results to Ashland."



### Evaluation

"I was new to Ashland when the ECAP process began, & I frankly can't imagine a better way to get to know a community in a hurry. To be able to hear collective opinions about the town's identity, the entrepreneurial opportunities available, & the community's vision for change & growth was extremely instructive.

I feel a sense of connection to & investment in Ashland that it might have taken me months or years to achieve without this process.

I highly recommend it as a way to assess aspects of your community & join with others toward proactive change, whether you are a life-long resident or the new kid on the block. Many thanks to UNI Extension!"



### Observations for Similar Strategy

- › Process sponsored by multiple org./groups
- › Diverse steering committee
  - One person liaison for each working group
- › Ask rep. of groups in community to introductory meeting
- › Organizer – for meetings & for media
- › Marketing essential – multiple ways
- › Get youth involved
- › Survey – include some of own questions
  - Market survey & vol. or hire compiling results



### Observations for Similar Strategy

- › 4 – 6 initial community meetings – fairly close together. Then continue.
- › Working groups report back at each community meeting – accountability
- › Outside coordinator? for meetings that encourages conversation
- › Record ALL input from meetings – charts, give summary back
- › Start positive with strengths of community.
- › Go beyond city limits for inclusion




**General  
ECAP  
MEETS MON.  
Jan. 19  
6:30 pm  
ACRC/  
Library  
Keeping  
Momentum**



### Be a Possibilitarian...



Charlotte Narjes, 402-472-1724 [cnarjes1@unl.edu](mailto:cnarjes1@unl.edu)  
 UNL CARI Special Projects Coordinator  
 Ag. Economics Dept. UNL  
 102 H.C. Filley Hall, East Campus Lincoln 68583-0922




**ASHLAND**  
 OFFERING THE BEST OF  
 PLAY DISCOVER RELAX  
 ASHLAND

**Thank You**



### Attractions & Opportunities

- › Mahoney State Park
- › Strategic Air & Space Museum
- › Lee G. Simmons Conservation Park & Wildlife Safari




## Recreation

- ▶ 4 nearby golf courses:
  - Ashland Golf Club, Quarry Oaks,
  - Iron Horse, & North 40 Golf Club
- ▶ Golf Frisbee course
- ▶ Trails
- ▶ Rivers
- ▶ Fishing
- ▶ Ice skating



The collage contains four images: a close-up of a golf course green and fairway; a modern golf clubhouse with a sign; an outdoor ice skating rink with people skating; and a golf course green with a prominent willow tree in the foreground. A small red logo is visible in the bottom right corner of the collage.



Virtual Tour

March 20, 2015  
by Doug Friedli



### Transportation



### Tourism



### Arbor Lodge & Arbor Day Farms



### Lied Lodge & Conference Center



### Recreation



### Education



Success Stories  
Doug Friedli

### Economic Development



Success Stories  
Doug Friedli

### Regional Trade Center



Success Stories  
Doug Friedli

### Sustainability

- Protect the Environment
- Leadership Development
- Diverse Tax Base
- Endowments. Giving Back...Paying Forward  
Kimmel, Wirth, Nelson, Steinhart, Kropp
- Nebraska City Community Foundation Fund  
Investing in People. Creating Culture of Giving



Success Stories  
Doug Friedli

### TREES

- Traffic. Tourism
- Recreation. Retail
- Education
- Economic Development
- Sustainability



Success Stories  
Doug Friedli

### First Impression, Lasting Memory



Success Stories  
Doug Friedli

## NEBRASKA SUCCESS STORIES – Doug Friedli

### Contact Info

- City of Nebraska City [www.nebraskacityne.gov](http://www.nebraskacityne.gov)
- Nebraska City Tourism and Commerce [www.gonebraskacity.com](http://www.gonebraskacity.com)
- Nebraska City Museum Association [www.nebraskacitymuseums.org](http://www.nebraskacitymuseums.org)
- Nebraska City Area Economic Development [www.nebraskacityareaedc.com](http://www.nebraskacityareaedc.com)
- Nebraska City Community Foundation Fund [www.nebraskacityfoundation.org](http://www.nebraskacityfoundation.org)
- Doug Friedli [dougfriedli@gmail.com](mailto:dougfriedli@gmail.com)



### Tips for using this template

- Select either the white or black layout for your **entire** PPT by right clicking on the slide in the left hand column and scrolling down to **Layout**.
- A variety of templates for title slides, text slides, image slides, and blank slides are available to choose from.
- Any questions? Please email [ppatel@pps.org](mailto:ppatel@pps.org)



**Citizen's Institute on Rural Design**

**Economic Development Panel**  
**CIRD Workshop – 2:35 to 3:50 PM**  
**March 20, 2015**  
**Lancaster County, Nebraska**

02.23.15 Version



**Center for Rural Entrepreneurship**  
energizing entrepreneurial communities

**Growing Successful Communities**

**March 20, 2015**

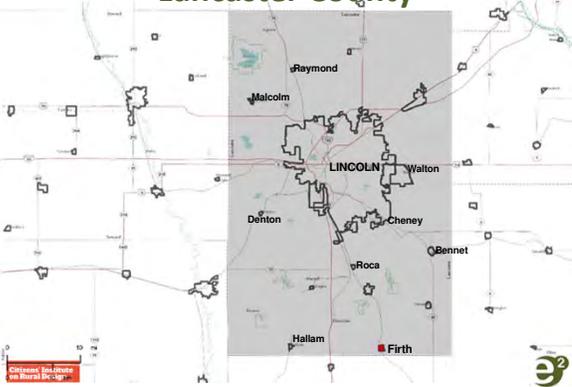


**Introduction**

- Firth Illustration
- Firth or Zip Code 68358
- Research – How the Outside World May View Firth and Lancaster County
- Lessons from Other Related Communities




**Lancaster County**




**Five Foundational Questions**

1. Who Lives in Firth?
2. How are the Residents Doing?
3. How is the Economy Doing?
4. How is the Community Doing?
5. What are Firth's Development Opportunities?




**Firth, Nebraska**

Center for Rural Entrepreneurship  
energizing entrepreneurial communities

Who Lives in Firth?

**Question 1**




**Quick Profile of Firth - 2014**

- Population – 1,969
- Median Age – 38.3 Years
- Households – 627
- Average Size – 3.05
- 2014-19 Growth Rate: 1.02%
- Predominately White
- Mostly Families
- Most Owner-Occupied Homes




**Generational Profile**

- Youth (18 & Under) – 35%
- Starting Up (20-34) – 12.3%
- Career Builders (35-54) – 31.1%
- Peaking (55-64) – 8.9%

**Working Age: 52.3%**

- Early Retirees (65-74) – 5.9%
- Mid-Retirees (75-84) – 4.3%
- Late-Retirees (85+) – 2.4%




**Two Households Types**

**Soccer Moms**

- 79.6% of all Households
- Average Size – 3.96 Persons
- Median Age – 36.6 Years

**Green Acres**

- 20.4% of all Households
- Average Size – 2.69 Persons
- Median Age – 43.0 Years





**Soccer Moms Households**

- Affluent
- Family-Oriented
- Country Flavor
- Suburban Wilderness
- Two Workers & Children
- Educated
- Connected
- Well-Insured
- Invested
- Paying Off Debt




**Green Acres Households**

- Country Living Preferences
- Exercise
- Self-Reliance – Do It Yourselfers
- Sports & Gardening
- Conservative & Pessimistic
- Yet Working Hard & Investing
- 60% College Educated
- Self-Employment
- Paying Off Debt
- Home Owners




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energizing entrepreneurial communities

How are the Residents Doing?

**Question 2**




**Disposable Incomes**

<b>Median</b>	\$53,172
<b>Mean</b>	\$62,892
<b>Ratio</b>	1.18x

Higher incomes when compared to Lancaster County and Nebraska averages.




**Household Wealth**

<b>Median</b>	\$166,067
<b>Mean</b>	\$618,904
<b>Ratio</b>	3.7x

Total household current net worth in 2014 is estimated at \$388 million.




**Center for Rural Entrepreneurship**  
energizing entrepreneurial communities

How is the Economy Doing?

**Question 3**




**Firth's Economy Profiled**

**Profile**

- Historic Farming Village
- Village Trade Center
- Increasingly Suburban Community

**Economic Drivers**

- Retirees
- Commuters
- Some Local Businesses
- Farming




<b>Business &amp; Occupation Profile</b>	<b>Top Businesses by Sector</b>
158 Businesses	1. Services - 55
80 Businesses Per 1,000 Residents	2. Agriculture - 29
419 Employees	3. Construction - 17
212 Employees Per 1,000 Residents	4. Retail Trade - 12
Wage & Salary - 686	5. Finances & Insurance - 11
Government - 171	6. Transportation - 8
Self-Employed - 51	7. Real Estate - 6
Retired - 240	8. Manufacturing - 3
	9. Wholesale Trade - 3
	<b>Retail Trade Capture</b>
	• Retail Demand - \$20.895 million
	• Retail Supply - \$2.652 million
	• Retail Gap - \$18.243 million or 87%



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How is the Community Doing?

**Question 4**




**You Need to Answer...**

*Every community must answer this question. The numbers provide only a partial answer. We recommend the use of community survey's, focus groups and town hall meetings to create a more subjective view of how residents feel their community is doing and where there is need for improvement.*




Center for Rural Entrepreneurship  
energizing entrepreneurial communities

What are Firth's Development Opportunities?

**Question 5**




**Lincoln – Growth Will Happen**

- Lincoln/Omaha Metro
- Right Sized Metros
- 1970-2013 = 1.43% Growth/Year
- 168,776 to 297,036 Residents
- Adding 3,417 Residents Each Year
- 2,298 from Births over Deaths
- 1,246 from Migration
- By 2066 – Over one-half million!




**Development Considerations**

- Massive Opportunities
- Firth has Choices
- Firth Can Influence these Choices
- Explore Kinds of Growth
- Grow a Development Vision
- Public-Private Partnerships
- Right Development Partners




**Sahuarita, Arizona**

**Situation:**  
 South Tucson – Bedroom Community  
 Explosive Suburban Growth  
 Midland Crowd – IT & Aviation  
 Great Recession Slowdown  
 Desire for a Domestic Base Economy

**Response:**  
 Stay at Home Spouses  
 800 Educated Home-Based Workers  
 Cluster Spin-Off Opportunities  
 System Support & Coaching




## Pottawattamie County, IA

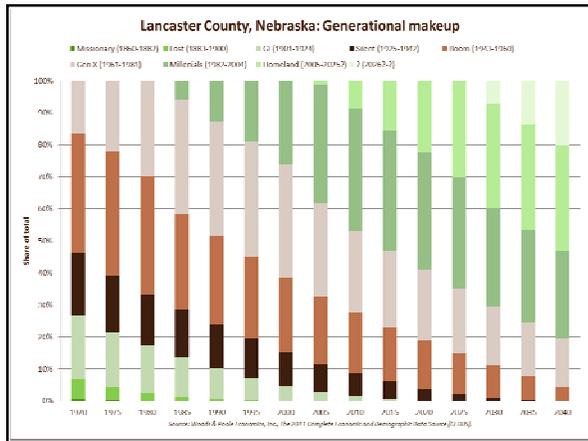
- Omaha & Council Bluffs Metro
- Western IA Development Assoc.
- Rural Villages in Pott County
- HomeTown Prosperity Framework:
  - Leadership
  - Philanthropy
  - Youth
  - Entrepreneurship
- Entrepreneur Coaching Program
- Stories Available




## Douglas County, KS

- NetWork Kansas
- Entrepreneurial Communities
- Lawrence KS Area
- Kansas City Foot Print
- Communities:
  - Eudora,
  - Lecompton
  - Baldwin City
- Community Opportunity Assessment





## Questions & Discussion

  
**Center for Rural Entrepreneurship**  
 energizing entrepreneurial communities

**Don Macke**  
 don@e2mail.org  
[www.energizingentrepreneurs.org](http://www.energizingentrepreneurs.org)



## Hello, I'm Mike

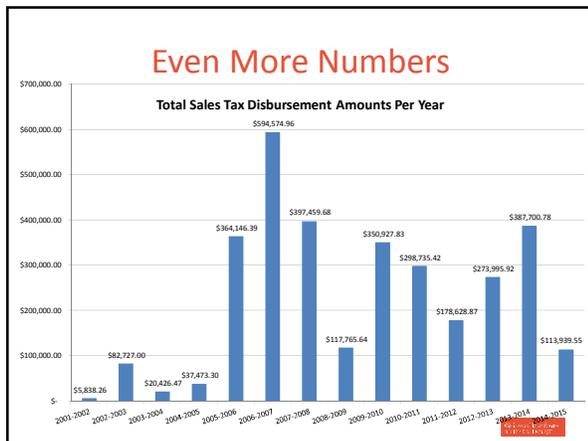
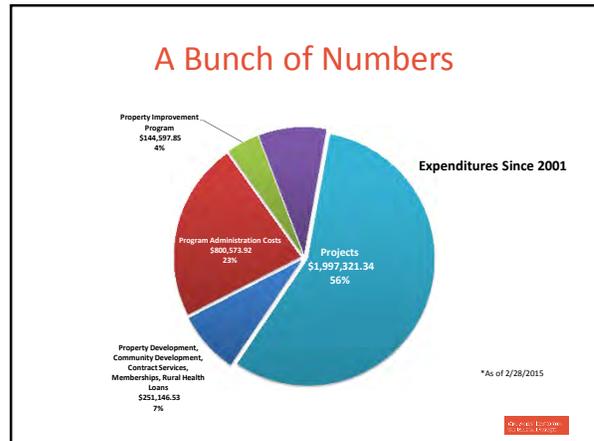
St Paul Development Corporation  
March 20, 2015

### Economic Development in St Paul

- St Paul, Nebraska – Pop. 2,290
- 25 Minutes North of Grand Island, NE
- ED Program started in 2001 with the passage of LB840 – 1% Sales Tax
- Renewed in 2014
- Mike Feeken hired June 2005

### St Paul Development Corporation

- Created in 1985
- 11 Member Board of Directors
- 26 Members
- Appointed administrator of City's ED Program



### So What?

- 104 Jobs Created
- \$4.5 Million in new valuation
- Over \$80,000 annual property tax added
- Curbed retail leakage to Grand Island

## Things I've Learned



## I AM A USED CAR SALESMAN



### YOUR COMMUNITY IS A PRODUCT

- How Good is Your Product?
- Would you buy it?
- What makes your Product better than the others?
  - Don't Say It's the People



### A Home is Where Jobs Sleep

- What kind of housing stock do you have?
- Nuisance Property Procedure?
  - AND it is being enforced?



### Other Things

- Not everyone will be happy.
- Success begets Success
- Bankers vs Farmers mindset
- Just Do It
- 50 Jobs



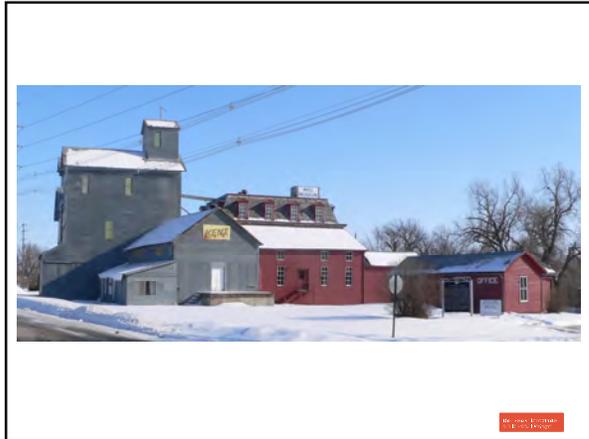
## Questions?

Thank You  
Mike Feeken  
308.754.4661 or [spdc@qwestoffice.net](mailto:spdc@qwestoffice.net)



# Neligh, not too small to have it all!

Greg Ptacek  
March, 20, 2015



**NELIGH, NEBRASKA**

**CITY GOVERNMENT**  
**ANTelope COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY**  
**ANTelope COUNTY JAIL MUSEUM**  
**PETerson WILDLIFE MUSEUM**

**WEATHER & FORECAST**

While Neligh's outstanding park system, museums and historic sites make it an attractive tourist destination, it is a modern community in which to work and live. Two physicians, a dentist and an outstanding hospital provide health care. The town has a fine modern library, both downtown and **globe-to** movies, hotels, restaurants, light manufacturing, **K-12** schools, and is the headquarters of **Educational Service Unit #8**.

The **Cowboy Trail** goes right past the park and downtown Main Street. It provides a delightful hiking/biking experience. Explore our Web site and see the many things Neligh has to offer.



**LB848**  
Unlocking New Opportunities  
for Neligh

Neligh Dream Team

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT – Greg Ptacek

**NELIGH, NEBRASKA**

CITY GOVERNMENT  
 WILDLIFE COUNTY  
 PUBLIC LIBRARY  
 WILDLIFE COUNTY JAC MUSEUM  
 PERSON WILDLIFE MUSEUM

WEATHER & FORECAST  
 (Weather.com, 24-hour forecast)

Neligh is the county seat of Artope County. The town was established in 1873 along the Elkhorn river by John D. Neligh. The water powered flour mill which was the economic anchor of the community for many years remains virtually intact as a State historic site.

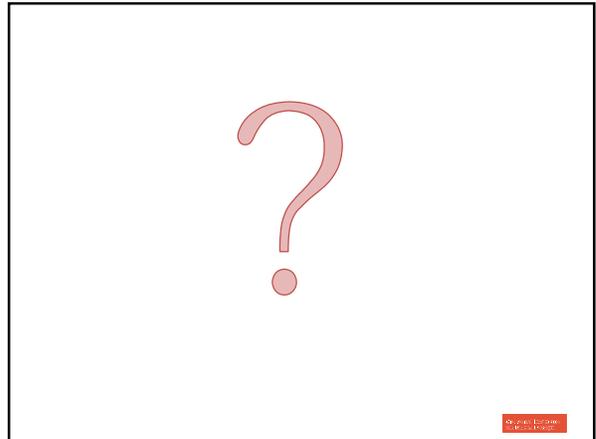
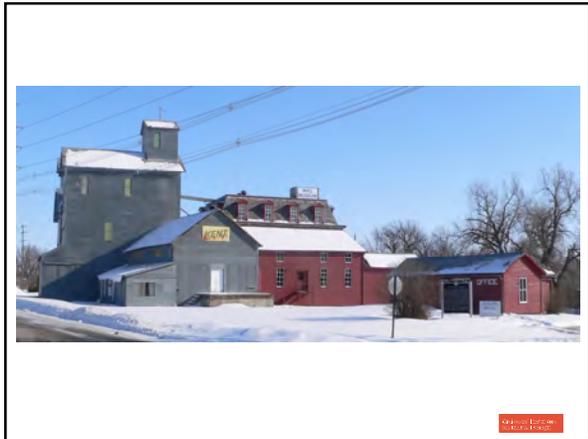
While Neligh's outstanding park system, museums and historic sites make it an attractive tourist destination, it is a modern community in which to work and live. Two physicians, a dentist and an outstanding hospital provide health care. The town has a fine modern library, both **bowling** and **golf** movies, motels, restaurants, light manufacturing, **6-12 schools**, and is the headquarters of Educational Service Unit #85.

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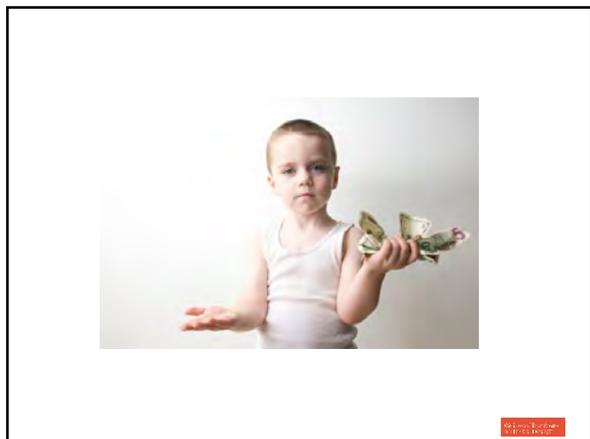
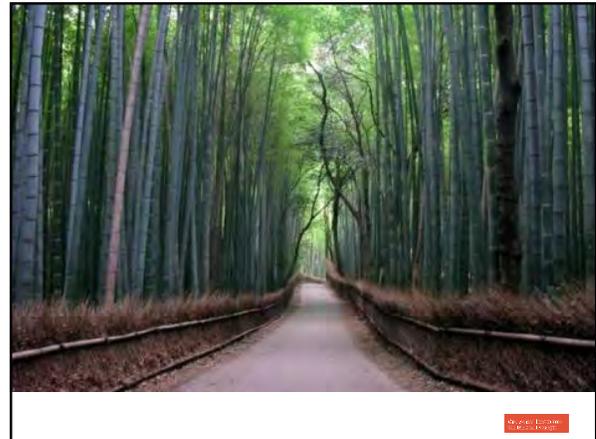
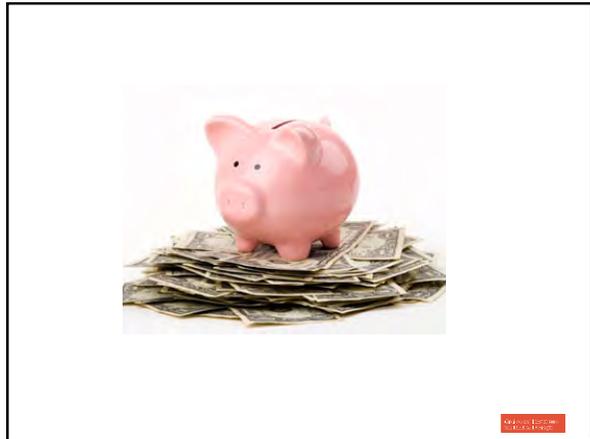



12



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT – Greg Ptacek





**INDIFFERENCE**

“The opposite of love is not hate ... it is indifference.”

- Elie Wiesel  
(Nobel Laureate & Holocaust survivor)

Graphic Design  
The Design



## Rural Development

### My Town, Lancaster County

Deborah Drbal, Business Programs Specialist  
 Krista Mettscher, Single Family Housing Specialist  
 March, 20, 2015

"USDA Rural Development is an Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer."

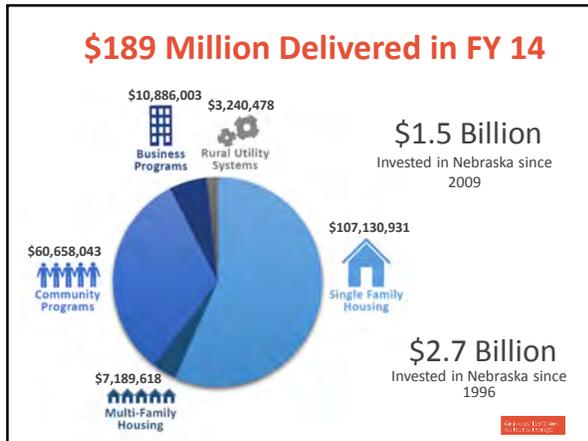


## USDA Rural Development's Mission

Increase Economic Opportunity	Create and Maintain Jobs	Enhance Quality of Life
-------------------------------------	--------------------------------	-------------------------------

### In Our Rural Communities





## What Services Does Rural Development Provide in Nebraska?



<b>Housing Programs</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Single Family</li> <li>• Multi-Family</li> </ul>	<b>Business, Cooperative and Energy Programs</b>	<b>Community Programs</b>
---	--	---------------------------



## Community Programs

### Community Facilities Loans Direct or Guaranteed and Grants

- Fire & rescue buildings and equipment
- Emergency sirens
- Community centers
- Libraries
- Senior citizen centers
- Day-cares
- Hospitals, clinics, medical records
- Nursing homes
- Assisted living facilities



Orchard Volunteer Fire Department



Community Memorial Hospital Syracuse



## Community Facilities Project

### Prairie Hills Learning Center Roca, Nebraska

Funds constructed a 2,940 square foot green building, purchased electric wind generation equipment and refinanced existing debt. 50 additional students; 1 additional teacher



The green facility features solar day lighting and heating, photo voltaic panels, wind energy generation, rain water collective from the roof, a 'cool roof' energy saving construction including straw bales, and an energy efficient heat pump system. The temperature remains constant at a comfortable 65 degrees in the building, eliminating the need for air conditioning and minimal use of the heat pump. The 10 kilowatt wind turbine brings the facility to 'Net Zero' on electricity thereby limiting the need for outside energy sources.



### Community Facilities Projects

**Auburn Memorial Library**

- Added 1340 sq. ft.
- Average 125 patrons each day, expansion enables library to accommodate additional computer services, expand reading programs and other services.




**Weeping Water Multi-Purpose Facility**

- Community renovated an old abandoned building constructed in 1935 for the use of a multi-purpose facility.
- The building is used for city offices and community functions, has a large social hall for gatherings and receptions.
- The local library is also located in the facility.





### Community Programs

**Water and Environmental (WEP) Loans and Grants**

**Water & Waste Disposal Projects**



Equipment Building



Water Pumps



Water Storage



Waste Treatment



### Water and Environmental Projects

**City of Atkinson**

- Original wastewater treatment plant was constructed in 1967.
- The disinfection system did not comply with the regulations.
- After extensive research looking at options of a lagoon system vs. a mechanical plant, soil testing and environmental studies, it was determined that a lagoon system was not feasible.




**City of Stromsburg**

- Drinking water standards were met by installing arsenic removal equipment for the water supply.
- Well house was rehabilitated and selected water mains and lines were replaced to accommodate higher flows.





### Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grants

**FY 14 Nebraska Awards Total = \$746,778**

**Purpose** – to meet the educational and health care needs of rural Nebraska

<p>Educational Service Unit #2 (Fremont) Distance Learning</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>\$283,248</b></p> <p>Increase educational offerings for high school students and adults</p>	<p>Educational Service Unit #10 (Kearney) Distance Learning</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>\$126,989</b></p> <p>Increase educational offerings for rural Nebraskans in remote isolated communities</p>
<p>Good Samaritan Hospital (Kearney) Telemedicine</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>\$155,041</b></p> <p>Provide a wide range of healthcare services for patients in rural Nebraska &amp; north central Kansas</p>	<p>KVC Health Systems, Inc. Telemedicine</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>\$181,500</b></p> <p>Serve children in foster care and their foster parents across the state of Nebraska</p>



### Business, Cooperative and Energy Programs

**13 active programs are delivered and serviced in Nebraska**

- Business & Industry Guaranteed Loan Program

<p><b>4 Energy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rural Energy for America Program (REAP)</li> <li>• Biorefinery Assistance</li> <li>• Repowering Assistance</li> <li>• Advanced Biofuel Repayment</li> </ul>	<p><b>4 Cooperative Programs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Value Added Producer Grants (VAPG)</li> <li>• Rural Business Opportunity Grants (RBOG)</li> <li>• Small Socially-Disadvantaged Producer Grants (SSDPG)</li> <li>• Rural Cooperative Development Grants (RCDG)</li> </ul>
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**4 Specialty Lending Loans and Grants**

- Rural Business Enterprise Grant (RBEG)
- Intermediary Relending Program (IRP)
- Rural Microentrepreneur Assistance Program (RMAP)
- Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant Program (REDLG)



### Business & Industry (B&I) Guaranteed Loans

<p><b>Clark Specialty Grains, LLC</b> Gothenburg, Nebraska</p> <p>This is a corn cleaning facility, specializing in food grain corn both organic and non-GMO, including blue corn. Funds were used to refinance existing real estate/facility debt, and pay off the loan balance of an investor for the start up of the facility.</p> <p>Jobs retained – 5      Jobs created - 1</p> 	<p><b>AARNA Hospitality, LLC</b> Scottsbluff, Nebraska</p>  <p>Purchase of an existing motel, updated modern rooms and additional remodeling. Through this project, a small community has an affordable Motel 6 upgraded to the most current standards, which also offers amenities (i.e. conference room) that many economy motels do not offer.</p> <p>Jobs retained – 2      Jobs created - 3</p> 
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PUBLIC & PRIVATE RESOURCES – Deborah Drbal & Krista Mettscher

### Rural Energy For America Program (REAP)



**Gewecke Family Farms, Inc., Wood River, Nebraska**

- Funds were used to replace an inefficient grain dryer.
- Projected annual energy savings is 73%.

**William Keep, Elm Creek, Nebraska**

- Funds were used to convert gravity irrigation to pivots, for well rebowls, and to add underground wire.
- This project provided funding to an underserved area as the business is co-owned by a woman.
- Projected annual energy savings is 48.74%.



**Colin Schwenka, Heartwell, Nebraska**

- Funds were used convert a diesel engine to an electric motor, adding underground wire.
- This project provides funding to an underserved area as the business is co-owned by a woman.
- Projected annual energy savings is 65.58%.



### Rural Energy For America Program (REAP)

**Foster's Family Foods, Inc. Elm Creek, Nebraska**

- Funds were used to replace coolers in a grocery store.
- Projected annual energy savings is 83.8%.



**John Johnson dba Elite Sports & Promotions Keith County, Nebraska**

- Funds were used to assist in the replacement of a corn-burning stove with a 5 ton, 14 seer heat pump and a 95% natural gas backup furnace.
- project annual energy savings is 41%.



### Value Added Producer Grant (VAPG)



**Gregory Nollette, Nenzel, Nebraska**

VAPG funds were used for marketing and operating costs to process Sandhill grapes into wine, selling into local markets.  
Jobs retained – 1    Jobs created - 1



**Burbach Countryside Dairy, Hartington, NE**

VAPG funds were used to help market and promote milk and cheese from Dean and Lisa Burbach's dairy. The Burbach's have a small family owned dairy that uses their milk for bottling. The milk is sold in glass bottles and shipped to over 75 stores in Nebraska.  
Jobs retained – 4    Jobs created – 4 to 5



### Rural Business Opportunity Grant (RBOG) & Rural Business Enterprise Grant (RBEG) combined into one program beginning FY 2015 Rural Business Development Grant (RBDG)

**Village of Walthill Walthill, Nebraska**



**RBOG** funds were used to complete a renewable energy feasibility study and a library strategic plan. The study and plan will allow the Village to determine the next phase of their economic development plan for an energy park and library expansion.  
Jobs retained - 0  
Jobs created - 5



**Loup Basin RC&D Council Burwell, Nebraska**

**RBEG** funds were used to provide technical assistance and training to farm businesses selling fresh foods to schools in the Loup Basin nine county service area.  
Jobs retained – 0  
Jobs created - 5

**Potter Historical Society Potter, Nebraska**

**RBEG** funds were used to purchase the vacant grocery store in Potter, Nebraska. The Potter Foundation repaired the building and leased it to a newly formed cooperative to reopen the grocery store and serve customers in Cheyenne, Banner and Kimball counties in Nebraska and Weld and Logan counties in Colorado.  
Jobs retained – 3  
Jobs created - 0



**Center for Rural Affairs Lyons, Nebraska**



**RBEG** funds were used to provide training and technical assistance resulting in;  
•the development of an organic community garden,  
•the development of a Farm to School project,  
•the development of a Farmers Market,  
•the development of small businesses for local artists and artisans.  
Jobs retained – 0  
Jobs created - 6

**First Ponca Financial, Inc. Grand Island, Nebraska**



**RBEG** funds were used to provide technical assistance, education and financial assistance through the establishment of a revolving loan fund to assist entrepreneurs in business development.  
•Jobs retained – 14  
•Jobs created - 6

### Intermediary Relending Program (IRP)

IRP is a loan - 1% interest, 30 year term funds are used to establish a revolving loan fund – Nebraska currently has 6 IRP Intermediaries administering 9 IRP loans - none serve Lancaster county.  
Eligible IRP Intermediaries are non-profits, public agencies, Indian groups & cooperatives.



### Rural Microentrepreneur Assistance Program (RMAP)

RMAP is a loan – 2% interest, 20 year term funds are used to establish a revolving loan fund – Nebraska currently has 5 RMAP Microentrepreneur Development Organizations (MDO) administering 7 RMAP loans. The Center for Rural Affairs and the Nebraska Enterprise Fund serve Lancaster County. Loan funds provide automatic eligibility for grant funds calculated at 25% of loan amount up to \$400,000/\$100,000. Grant funds must be used to provide technical assistance to entrepreneurs seeking loan funds. Eligible RMAP MDOs are non-profits, Indian tribes & public institutions of higher education.

### Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant (REDLG)

Public Power Districts & Municipalities eligible for grant funds only; telephone companies & other electric utilities eligible for loan or grant funds

**City of Gering (Intermediary)  
Legacy of the Plains (Ultimate Recipient)**



The City of Gering will loan the funds to Legacy of the Plains to construct two additions to their existing facility and construct a new building. Legacy of the Plains is a historical museum depicting the development of the North Platte Valley along the Oregon Trail. As the loan is paid back to the City of Gering, a revolving loan fund will be established to assist new and expanding businesses. Jobs retained-1 Jobs created-15

**City of Gothenburg (Intermediary)  
Gothenburg Improvement Company (Ultimate Recipient)**



This project will allow the City of Gothenburg to obtain funds to relend to Gothenburg Improvement Company at zero percent interest for 10 years to complete the needed infrastructure for an Industrial Tract for new businesses. Jobs retained-0 Jobs created-17

### Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant (REDLG)

**City of Cozad (Intermediary)  
Cozad Development Corporation (Ultimate Recipient)**

This project will allow City of Cozad to obtain funds to relend to Cozad Development Corporation at 0% interest for 10 years for the purchase and renovation of a Spec Building.  
Jobs retained-0 Jobs created-10



**Nebraska Central Telephone Company (Intermediary)  
Popcorn County USA (Ultimate Recipient) Gibbon, Nebraska**



Rural Development funds were used to construct a new popcorn processing facility, replacing an existing facility, and making necessary equipment upgrades.  
Jobs Retained – 11 Jobs Created – 0

## Housing Programs

Multi-Family  
Single Family

### Multi-Family Housing

Guaranteed Rural Rental Housing Loans  
- new construction and acquisition with rehabilitation

Direct Rural Rental Housing Loans  
- construct new or rehabilitate or convert existing buildings into apartments

Direct Farm Labor Housing Loans and Grants



### Guaranteed Rural Rental Housing Loan






**Independence Court Apartments  
Seward, Nebraska**

**Kelley Creek Apartments  
McCook, Nebraska**

### Guaranteed Rural Rental Housing Loan

**East Ward Village, McCook, NE**

- Converted former Eastward School Building into 15 apartments.
- Constructed six new duplexes.
- Resulting in 27 units for elderly and handicapped residents.





### Direct Rural Rental Housing Loan

<p><b>Northland Waverly Waverly, NE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Began operation January 1996</li> <li>• 25 Units</li> <li>• Project designated as a family project</li> </ul> 	<p><b>North Meadows Apartments Waverly, NE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Began operation February 1979</li> <li>• 24 Units</li> <li>• Project designated an elderly project</li> </ul> 	<p><b>Gracemont Apartments Firth, NE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Began operation July 1981</li> <li>• 8 Units</li> <li>• Project is designated as a family project</li> </ul> 
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### Farm Labor Housing

**Purpose**

- To provide housing and related facilities for domestic farm laborers including processing plant workers
- To increase the supply of affordable housing for farm laborers
- To attract farm laborers by providing housing which is affordable, safe, sound and sanitary
- Housing can be off-farm or on the farm

**Eligible Applicants**

- Broad-based nonprofit organizations, nonprofit organizations of farm workers, Federally recognized Indian Tribes, agencies or political subdivisions of state or local government, individual farmers, family farm partnerships or corporation and farmer associations



Picture attributed to Ruralhousingcoalition.org



### Farm Labor Housing

**Two Forms of Assistance**

- Loans available to all applicants
- Loan term is 33 years
- Loan interest rate from 1% to current Agency market rate depending if the applicant can obtain credit elsewhere
- Grants available to nonprofits for political subdivisions only
- Grant can be up to 90% of total development cost

Location of the project is not restricted by population limits, can be built in an urban area



Picture attributed to Ruralhousingcoalition.org



### Affordable Single Family Housing Through USDA Programs

**RESPONSIBLE LENDING**

Home Ownership Opportunities – Two distinctly different programs:

- Direct
- Guarantee
- 100% Financing
- Fixed rates & terms
- Home Repairs - Loans and Grants




*"Investing in Rural Nebraska Communities ...One Relationship at a Time"*



### Direct Home Ownership Loan Program

Primary goal is to provide affordable quality housing to low and very low income households. (Existing or New Construction)

- 100% financing
- Low interest rates - 3.00% (March 2015)
- Payment assistance can reduce interest rate to as low as 1% (subject to recapture)
- Mortgage limits by county (\$145-170,000)
- Modest housing = 1,800 Sq. Ft.
- Finance repairs & closing costs (per appraised value)
- Centralized processing by RD Housing Staff
- FREE pre-qualifications available




### Guaranteed Homeownership Loan Program

- Loans processed & underwritten through approved lenders
- Generous income limits-moderate income
- 100% financing- Up to 102% with GRH fee financed
- No maximum purchase price
- Loans are at a 30 year fixed interest rate negotiated between lender and applicant (RD does cap maximum rate)
- Finance repairs & eligible closing costs (per appraisal)
- Low .4% annual fee
- Participation with NIFA available
- NOT just for first time homebuyers



### Rural Home Repair Loans/Grants



### Rural Home Repair Loan Program

- Loan funds can be used to improve or modernize dwelling as well as removal of health and safety hazards (must be primary residence)
- Very low income household
- Fund Uses: Repairs to improve or modernize home, make it safer or more sanitary, or remove health and safety hazards
- Loans - 1% interest rate - Up to 20 year term
- Maximum amount - \$20,000
- A deed of trust is required on loans exceeding \$7,500
- Leverage with partners to provide maximum utilization of funds



### Rural Home Repair Grant Program

- Applicants must own their own home and are very-low income households (50% of median household adjusted income for the county)
- Grants are only available to homeowners 62 years of age or older
- Requires lack of repayment ability for a loan
- Grant funds can only be used to remove health or safety hazards, or remodel dwellings to make them accessible to household members with disabilities
- Maximum lifetime grant is \$7,500
- Requires 3 year Grant Agreement



### Rural Home Repair Grant



USDA Rural Development provided \$7,500 through its Rural Home Repair Grant program that was leveraged with HOME funds of \$5,853 contributed by the Community Action Partnership of Mid Nebraska in Kearney, property located in Holbrook



### Home Ownership Opportunities



[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oq95tIi6\\_dI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oq95tIi6_dI)  
(English)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=all0QLaWNXI>  
(Spanish)

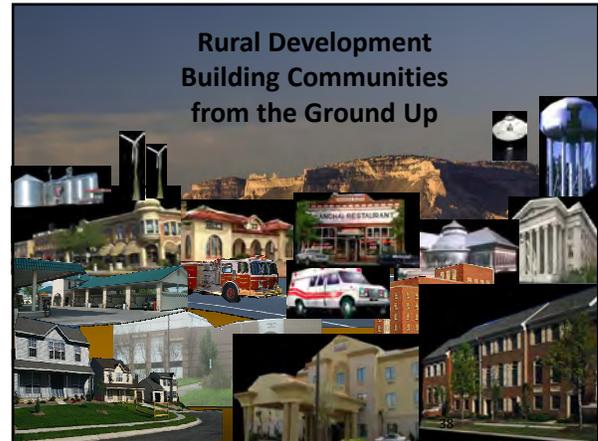


## The USDA Rural Development Website for Nebraska

<http://www.rd.usda.gov/ne>

### Contacts for Lancaster County

- Community Programs – Janice Stopak 402-437-5743  
[janice.stopak@ne.usda.gov](mailto:janice.stopak@ne.usda.gov)
- Business Programs – Bill Sheppard 402-371-5350 extension 1004  
[bill.sheppard@ne.usda.gov](mailto:bill.sheppard@ne.usda.gov)
- Multi-family Housing – Terri Kostal 402-437-5557  
[terri.kostal@ne.usda.gov](mailto:terri.kostal@ne.usda.gov)
- Single Family Housing – Rebecca Adams 402-437-5748  
[rebecca.adams@ne.usda.gov](mailto:rebecca.adams@ne.usda.gov)



### Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper

- Comfort, Amenities & Public Art
- Activation Events
- Interim Public Spaces
- Light Development

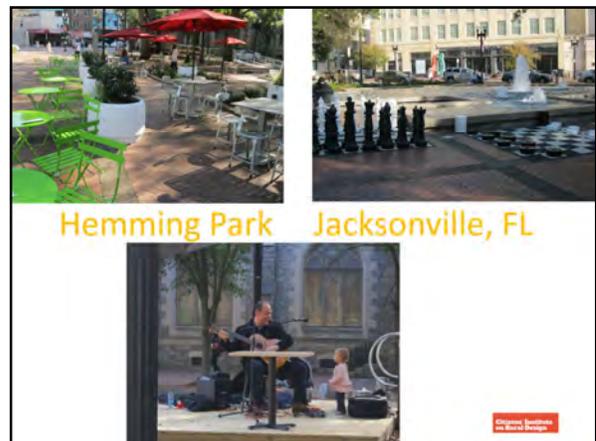
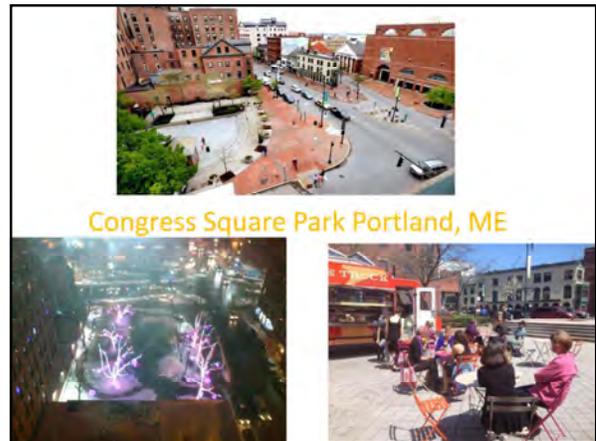
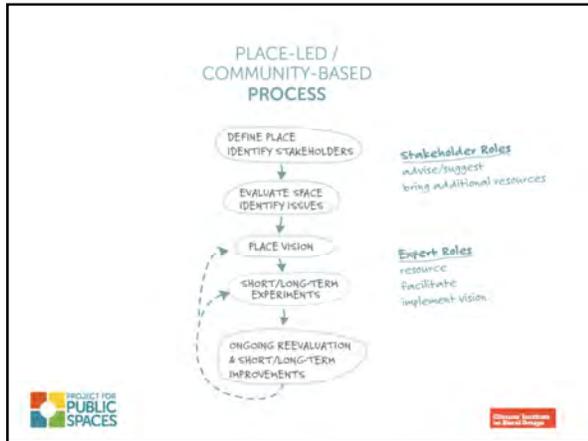


43 countries, 6 continents,  
50 US states, 7 Canadian provinces,  
110 major cities, 3,000 communities

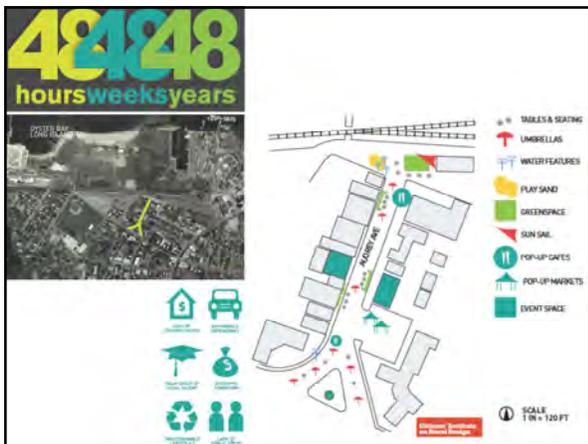
40 Years of Placemaking!

Citigroup Equities  
and Social Design

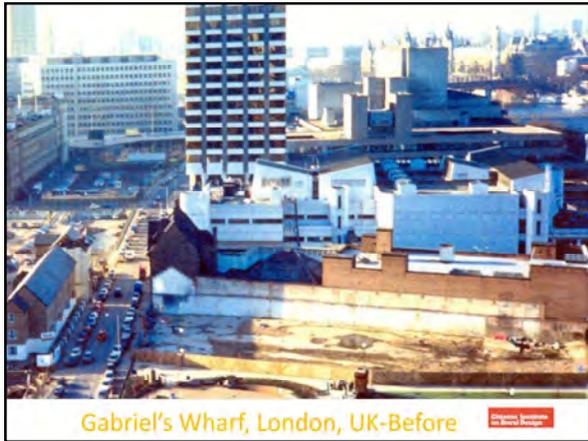
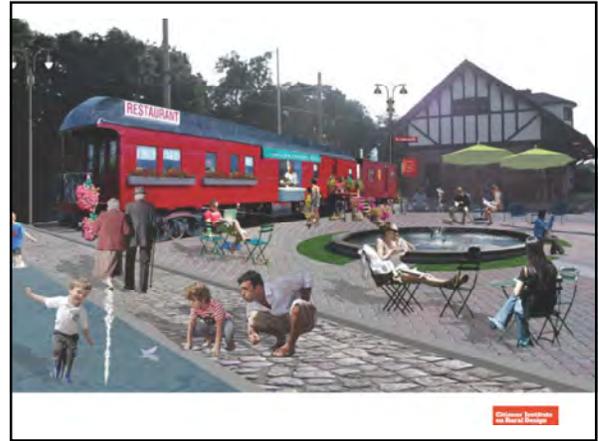




LIGHTER, QUICKER, CHEAPER – Cynthia Nikitin



LIGHTER, QUICKER, CHEAPER – Cynthia Nikitin



Gabriel's Wharf, London, UK-Before



Gabriel's Wharf, London, UK-After



Gabriel's Wharf



Uses:  
Market, A3, Performance Space  
Area: 20,000 sq.ft (1,858 sq.m)  
(internal and external)  
Jobs Created: 60  
USM Investment: £78,000

Gabriel's Wharf



## RENEW AUSTRALIA

**Renew Australia** is a new national social enterprise designed to catalyse community renewal, economic development, the arts and creative industries across Australia.

**Renew Australia** works with communities and property owners to take otherwise empty shops, offices, commercial and public buildings and use them available to incubate short-term use by artists, creative projects and community initiatives.








## Westbury's Keys to Achieving Successful Revitalization via LQC Interventions

- ✓ Find ways to create dynamics that foster experimentation rather than expecting solutions to arrive fully formed. Interventions born of this process build lasting value.
- ✓ Don't overlook large, private property companies: they can be essential partners and, because they often own a lot of land, can provide access to the critical mass of places necessary to revitalize a whole district.
- ✓ Healthy, dynamic public spaces are very important for healthy cities. However, you need to be careful to get beyond the idea of cosmetic improvements and actually create new dynamic that generates more interesting and engaging public spaces.
- ✓ A "network of networks" approach to outreach is a really effective way to recruit the merchants and artists necessary to enliven a district. Use multiple means to reach a broad group of people: Facebook, the local media, public meetings, and Etsy.



## Stay in Touch!



[pps.org](http://pps.org) (read our blog, subscribe to our free newsletter)

 [@PPS\\_Placemaking](https://twitter.com/PPS_Placemaking)

 [facebook.com/ProjectforPublicSpaces](https://facebook.com/ProjectforPublicSpaces)

 [PPS\\_Placemaking](https://www.instagram.com/PPS_Placemaking)



# Leadership Development

Milan Wall  
March 21, 2015



## Leadership Skills

Vision Builder  
Team Facilitator  
Consensus Maker



## Leadership Roles

Coach  
Orchestra Conductor  
Film Director



## Stages of Leadership

Trouble Makers  
Movement Organizers  
Power Brokers



## Static vs. Innovative Communities

Static	Innovative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Rigid</li><li>• Hierarchical</li><li>• Task Oriented</li><li>• Cautious</li><li>• Closed</li><li>• One-Way Communication</li><li>• Feelings Repressed</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Flexible</li><li>• Collaborative</li><li>• People Oriented</li><li>• Experimental</li><li>• Open</li><li>• Multi-Directional Communication</li><li>• Feelings Expressed</li></ul>



## Management is about coping with complexity...

- Leadership is about coping with change.



### How Were You Recruited?



Source: Heartland Center for Leadership Development

### Think of a Time When You Were Recruited for a Volunteer Role

Who recruited you and what did they say?

Source: Heartland Center for Leadership Development

### Ten Ideas for Recruiting New Leaders

Source: Heartland Center for Leadership Development

### Ten Ideas for Recruiting New Leaders

1. Ask the Question, “Who’s Not Here?”
2. Look for Skills, Not Names
3. Try Involvement by Degrees
4. Appeal to Self-Interests
5. Use a Wide-Angle Lens

Source: Heartland Center for Leadership Development

### Ten Ideas for Recruiting New Leaders

6. Define the Task
7. Use Current Leaders to Recruit New Leaders
8. Create a History of Efficient Use of People’s Time
9. Offer Membership “Premiums”
10. Market Your Wares

Source: Heartland Center for Leadership Development



3110 N. 40<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite A  
Lincoln, Nebraska 68504  
www.heartlandcenter.info

Source: Heartland Center for Leadership Development

# Appendix F: Maps

## *My Town, Bennet*



## *My Town, Denton*



Photo Courtesy Lincoln-Lancaster County Planning Department Photo taken May 2013

## *My Town, Firth*



## *My Town, Hallam*



Photo Courtesy, Lincoln-Lancaster County Planning Department. Photo taken May 2013

## *My Town, Hickman*



Photo Courtesy Lincoln-Lancaster County Planning Department Photo taken May 2013

*My Town, Panama*



Photo Courtesy Lincoln-Lancaster County Planning Department Photo taken May 2013

*My Town, Waverly*

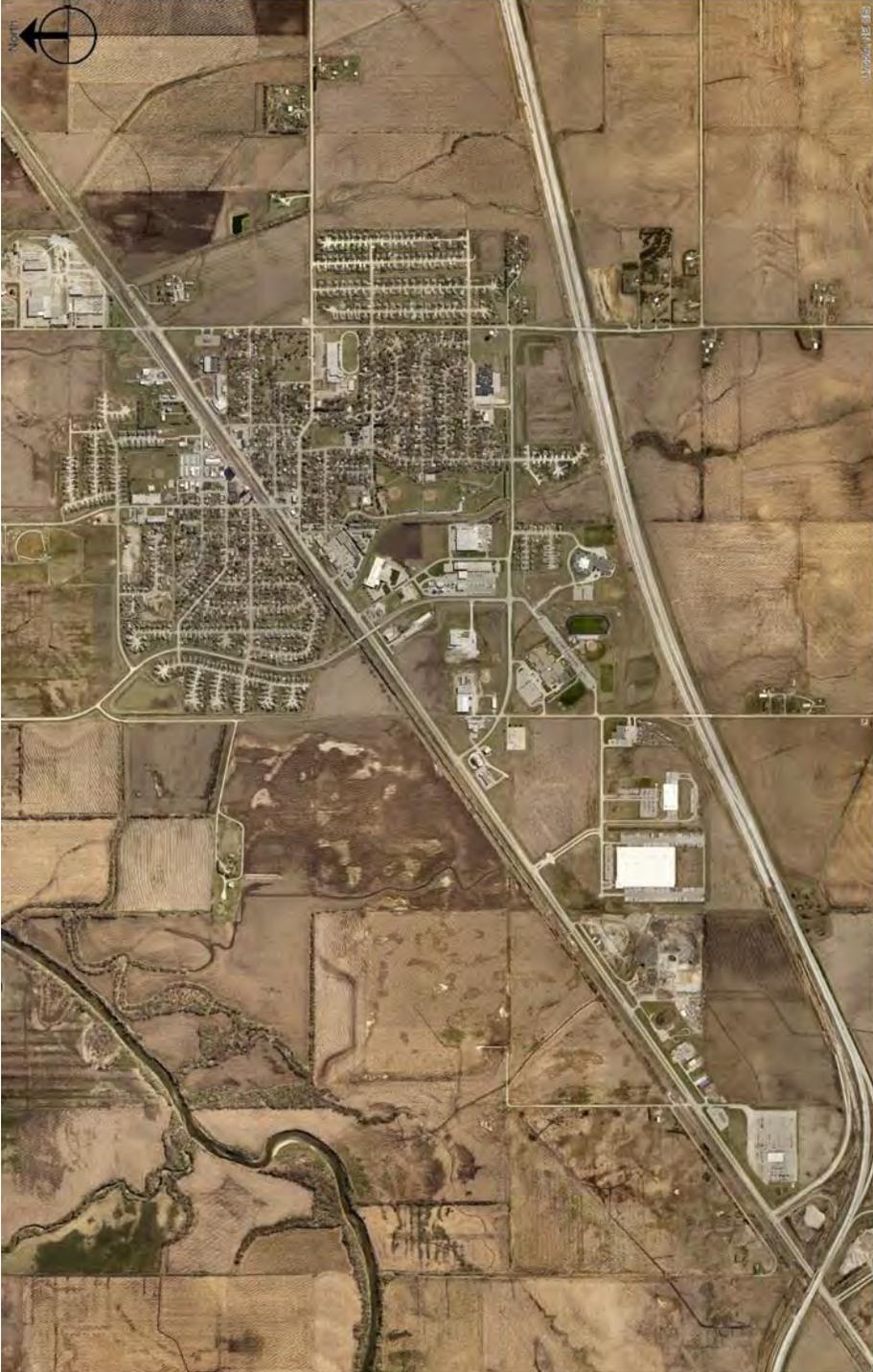


Photo Courtesy: Lincoln-Lancaster County Planning Department; Photo taken May 2013

*My Town, Waverly*  
*Close-up*



Photo Courtesy Lincoln-Lancaster County Planning Department Photo taken May 2013

## Appendix G: Photos

The following pages include contact sheets of all photos taken at the workshop by Vicki Jedlicka (Lancaster County Extension) and David Nelson (Project for Public Spaces). Select photos are posted on the *My Town, Lancaster County* Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/MyTownLancaster](http://www.facebook.com/MyTownLancaster). Copies can be requested from the Lincoln-Lancaster County Planning Department.



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# Appendix H: Participant Survey Results

PERFORMED VIA SURVEY MONKEY (22 RESPONSES RECEIVED)

## 1. How did you hear about this event? Please check all that apply.

Email	4
Newspaper	1
Letter of Invitation	9
Other	6

*Comments:*

*Sara came to us with information and we received invitations. Could not check more than one.*

## 2. What did you hope to get out of the CIRD workshop?

*As a non-profit, I hoped to learn more about being able to move the community forward through the efforts of a community foundation*

## 3. Please rate how well the workshop achieved the following goals:

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
A. Educated people about local design issues	0	1	9	12
B. Provided tools, resources, and useful information	0	2	9	11
C. Helped the community develop prioritized ideas for action	1	1	6	14

*Comments:*

*A. Some of the speakers fit better with much larger communities.*

*Some examples were for larger communities. That could help stretch your vision though.*

*The examples that other towns have done was good. Speaker Ed McMahon was very good.*

*B. Some of the information was for larger populated towns. It might have been advantageous for the speakers to at least drive through the towns represented prior to the workshop.*

*Could have not had the person talking about loans for homeowners. That was not something that was pertinent to our community.*

*C. Each community developed and prioritized specific projects for their town.*

**4. Please rate the quality of the workshop for:**

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
A. Interactive Sessions (Small Working Group Activities; Small Group Discussions, etc.)	0	0	9	12
B. Unstructured networking and socializing	1	5	9	7
C. Visual quality of the Speakers' presentations	0	0	10	12
D. Speakers' knowledge of their subject matter	0	0	3	19
E. Familiarity of the presenters and speakers with the design challenges facing the community	1	5	9	7
F. Relevance of the workshop topics to local design challenges	1	3	12	6
G. Usefulness of the tools and approaches presented	0	5	7	10
H. Refreshments and Facilities	0	1	6	15
I. Workshop organization	0	3	4	13
J. How would you rate your overall experience during this workshop? Please check one	0	3	5	14

**Comments:**

A. *The Saturday location was kind of loud. The metal building reverberated the sound. Beautiful location though.*

*There was an intent to mix communities on Saturday. Working with the community members was useful.*

*With a couple of group activities we worked with members of other towns, offering opportunities to share ideas.*

*Other than Saturday. That got very long and not helpful in the afternoon.*

B. *Able to talk with other communities about what has worked in their community and how it worked.*

*Not enough time to speak to other groups.*

C. *The speakers overall were very good. The FmHA speakers could have been better. They pretty much read their slides.*

D. *I think the speakers were very knowledgeable about their subject, but I do not think that some of the speakers were appropriate for small town organizations which I thought was the primary target for the project.*

*Again - some of what was presented did not pertain to very small towns so even though the speakers were knowledgeable about their subject matter some of it was not applicable.*

*All the speakers had a good knowledge of their subject matter.*

*I thought Ed was a very good speaker, the Friday morning session was good, I didn't get much out of the afternoon session. Wasn't able to attend Saturday.*

- E. *Again - Some didn't seem to understand we were dealing with some towns of less than 1,000*

*They could generalize their knowledge to our specific needs.*

*Not sure if all the speakers were familiar with all the towns that were represented (if they had been in all the towns).*

*The goal of the workshop, as I understood it, (and the grant that funded it) was to focus on rural communities surrounding a medium sized metropolitan city. The out-of-state speakers focused primarily on large cities and didn't really address the Lancaster County situation.*

- F. *Some of the things presented were not applicable to towns as small as ours.*

*We can all apply topics to our particular needs.*

*Would have been useful if the speakers had toured all the towns and then offered comments or suggestions for improvements.*

- G. *We came away with some good tools for moving forward.*

*Some economic development is more important to survival more than festival planning.*

*It was a very worthwhile workshop.*

- H. *All three facilities were top notch.*

*Well done. Great variety of venues.*

*All three facilities were good!*

- I. *Very well organized. The food was good and having it available took the stress out of having to figure out meals etc.*

*Friday was a full day for everyone.*

*Sara did a great job!*

*There is a lot of information presented in a very short time period. Sometimes, there was not much time for questions. Maybe extend the workshop by an additional half day for more discussion and questions.*

*It was a grueling pace Friday. It was a lot to ask of volunteers from the community. The mentioned they were tired but enjoyed the overall experience.*

- J. *Great Job!!*

*I hope our community can benefit from our suggestions.*

*The Waverly folks really enjoyed participating in the workshop.*

*I think it would be useful for the Lincoln-Lancaster Planning Dept to have an follow-up annual update, only one day in length. it should focus on our rural communities and interaction with county departments and officials that could help us.*

*It identified areas of concentration for our City.*

**5. With regard to the course design do you wish there was more, less or the same amount of:**

	More	Less	Same
Presentations	1	6	15
Questions and Answers	8	0	14
Group Discussions	7	1	14
Team Work Sessions	4	1	17
Practical Exercises	4	1	17
Site Visits	7	1	11

**Comments:**

*I think the national speakers would have been more in tune with what Lancaster County towns are dealing with if they have toured the actual towns.*

*Maybe needed more talk of funding for projects.*

*Time was limited to do much differently.*

*I'm not sure I understand what is meant by "Site Visits".*

*Unsure of site visits and what that means.*

**6. What was the most valuable part of the workshop for you? (Please list one or two and note reasons why.)**

*Listening to the speakers and becoming motivated to try new ideas.*

*Team work sessions - prioritizing Ideas of thinking "outside the box" Networking with other Lancaster County towns.*

*Understanding importance of prioritization, getting others to buy in or being a champion. So that you as a City have a foundation to get these done.*

*Community stories - most instructive, relevant*

*Ed's opening presentation was a great starter. Cynthia's "Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper" was practical considerations rather than more expensive options.*

*Workshops that allowed us to define objectives so we can implement them and examples provided through speakers stimulated the creativity.*

*Examples of what has worked in other communities and the reality that it would work in our town and discussion of how to make it work in our town.*

*Exposure to new ideas and concepts. Getting to know community resources. Getting to know other cities and their people and issues.*

*I learned that you can do little things in the community to make it better. Also, I learned that even towns smaller than Waverly can afford Economic Development directors.*

*The SOAR exercise was good. Wish we had a little more time with it. I was not able to attend on Saturday so maybe the Saturday session built on the SOAR exercise. It generated some ideas. The*

*keynote speaker had some good ideas but it was too long. He needed to use about one-third that he had so that he could focus on the key "take home" points. We didn't need to see pictures of 20 MacDonald restaurants to get the point of uniqueness. The Wilber lady was very entertaining.*

*Working with community and board members*

*SOAR Team Work sessions. They allowed our group to communicate our goals and aspirations and actions.*

*Cynthia's presentations were great. Seeing pictures of before and after jobs was helpful.*

*Discussions of our town's character. We need to know what to brand.*

*Opportunity to hear from well qualified consultants at a very reasonable cost! Facilitated small group discussions to start to develop plans.*

*Ed's presentation was interesting.*

## **7. What was the least valuable part?**

*Short breaks; 15 minute breaks instead of 5 minutes.*

*Presentations using larger towns as examples - ie, franchise restaurants etc. That is never going to happen in our small town.*

*1. Loud room on Saturday. 2. Sandwiches for lunch Saturday. (just my own preference)*

*The loan information from USDA as have heard it before.*

*Friday afternoon need-based grant presentations were for someone other than community volunteers. Group time needed more focus so discussion leaders shaped similar outcomes for all groups.*

*The presentation from the organization on the second day that didn't provide services to Lancaster County.*

*Can't think of anything.*

*Had a presentation from SENDD that does not apply to Lancaster County. Why?*

*None*

*I didn't get much out of Ms. Nikitin or Mr. Nelson - again because they didn't relate to small town Nebraska.*

*the speaker that was there and no one could join his "group" because Lancaster county was not a part of it. Did think we needed to watch utube video either. a link would have been all we needed especially since this was a very long day*

*The abundance of presentations and information.*

*Listening about private house loans. Not sure how I would be able to convey that information to potential residents.*

*presentations that focused on cities with large populations and federally funded projects*

*These workshops really aren't very relevant for a village the size of Denton. We don't have the resources (people or money) to do much zoning &/or planning. The citizens don't want to think about either until their neighbor moves in a goat or wants to live in a motorhome in the driveway.*

### **8. What were the most significant learning outcomes for you from the workshop?**

*The power of 10. Finding ways to expand upon current activities. Collaboration between our communities. Low cost, low risk and high impact ideas to implement immediate results.*

*Several priorities we can work on right away and get the public and local government engaged together.*

*1. The ideas for developing a community center. 2. What other towns do for community betterment.*

*The idea to do things to improve the image of your city, but find those that don't cost a lot of money.*

*Real world solutions are being implemented in Nebraska communities*

*Good interaction between elected, hired, and commission volunteers to learn issues and interests.*

*Learning about possibilities through other presentations and towns.*

*We had a fantastic representation of people from our community and everyone is so excited about our community and wanting to help out. We have some low hanging fruit that we can successfully accomplish.*

*New enthusiasm within the community members that attended. New ideas to take back to our community.*

*There is money available from the Department of Agriculture to fund projects and make the community a better place to live. Pick one or two projects and complete them well and then move on to the next project.*

*The focus on space and thinking about available assets and opportunities.*

*Design standards and asking for different commercial options in design.*

*The simple ways that minor improvements could be made to make an impact.*

*there are resources available to support projects, human and financial*

*Discovery of the common issues in the small communities surrounding Lincoln. We can learn from each other.*

*Regardless of population, most villages & towns have the same challenges. Want to grow & have more business.*

### **9. Are there any topics or issues you wish had been addressed at this time?**

*There was a lot of valuable information provided. I think that if you would try to add anything else you would have needed more time.*

*Issues specific to towns of less than 1,000.*

*Funding options for community development.*

No.

*Preservation and restoration vs. TIF. Not all old structures are suited to historic preservation and restoration.*

*More on funding avenues and grants*

*Funding and resources that are available to help communities with their priority(s)*

No

None

*The idea of collaboration between communities was a good topic but that presentation did not help me in that regard at all. The presentation by the Lancaster Planning Dept was good but it needed to go further with discussion on possible interaction and how the Dept can help our rural communities.*

No

*how to save dollars and still improve the town's quality of life. how to collaborate with others to purchase equipment, services, consultation, etc. waste disposal options instead of burning organics recycling options fund raising for town projects*

*A specific plan to follow up, work together, hold each other accountable to implement some of the good ideas we talked about.*

**10. Were there any topics or issues you wish were not part of the workshop?**

No

*The USDA and SENDD presentations could have been given in brochure form with contact information. It didn't seem necessary to take time to talk about each USDA funding option and SENDD does not service Lancaster County for most things.*

*All topics were pertinent. Again great job. Thank you for all your efforts.*

No

No

No

No

No

None

*The Economic Development session was interesting but our communities are large enough to have an economic development director,*

*SEDD*

**11. Which of the following categories characterize your role(s) in the community? Please check all that apply.**

Local Government	12	
Business/Private Sector	3	
Non-profit	4	
Service Club or organization	1	
Residential	4	
Other	1	(education)

## 2014 Request for Proposals

### II. PRELIMINARY BUDGET

APPLICANT NAME: Lancaster County

WORKSHOP EXPENSES	CIRD Grant Funds (up to \$7,000)	In-Kind Match			Cash Match			Expense Subtotal
		Amount	Committed?	Source	Amount	Committed?	Source	
<b>Coordination &amp; Logistics</b>	\$ -	\$ 9,300.00			\$ -			\$ 9,300.00
Coordinator(s) time/salary		\$ 4,250.00	Yes	Planning	\$ -			\$ 4,250.00
Planning Staff time/salary		\$ 2,750.00	Yes	Planning	\$ -			\$ 2,750.00
Extension Staff time/salary		\$ 2,100.00	Yes	County Extension	\$ -			\$ 2,100.00
County Board time/salary		\$ 200.00	Yes	County Board	\$ -			\$ 200.00
Other (specify):		\$ -			\$ -			\$ -
<b>Workshop Event</b>	\$ 6,200.00	\$ 600.00			\$ 2,200.00			\$ 9,000.00
Facility Rental	\$ 200.00	\$ 600.00	Yes	County Extension	\$ -			\$ 800.00
A/V Equipment	\$ -	\$ -			\$ 300.00	Yes	County Board	\$ 300.00
Workshop Materials	\$ 500.00	\$ -			\$ 500.00	Yes	County Board	\$ 1,000.00
Printing Materials	\$ -	\$ -			\$ 400.00	Yes	County Board	\$ 400.00
Meals & Refreshments*	\$ 2,500.00	\$ -			\$ -			\$ 2,500.00
Additional speaker(s) expenses	\$ 1,000.00	\$ -			\$ 1,000.00	Yes	County Board	\$ 2,000.00
Transportation	\$ -	\$ -			\$ -			\$ -
Recording, photography, etc.	\$ -	\$ -			\$ -			\$ -
Insurance (if required)	\$ -	\$ -			\$ -			\$ -
Public event expenses	\$ 2,000.00	\$ -			\$ -			\$ 2,000.00
Other (specify):	\$ -	\$ -			\$ -			\$ -
<b>Outreach &amp; Communications</b>	\$ 800.00	\$ -			\$ -			\$ 800.00
Publicity & marketing	\$ 400.00	\$ -			\$ -			\$ 400.00
Postage & printing	\$ 400.00	\$ -			\$ -			\$ 400.00
<b>INCOME SUBTOTALS</b>	\$ 7,000.00	\$ 9,900.00			\$ 2,200.00			\$ 19,100.00

**TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET \$ 19,100.00**



# Appendix J: Expenditures

CIRD Funds				
Revenue and Expense Report				
Business Unit 295692				
Date	Revenue (.4301)	Expenditure	Balance	Comment
9/2/2014	\$ 7,000.00		\$ 7,000.00	
10/22/2014		\$ 16.81	\$ 6,983.19	Photocopies
12/3/2014		\$ 1.84	\$ 6,981.35	Postage
12/17/2014		\$ 3.31	\$ 6,978.04	Photocopies
1/16/2015		\$ 66.30	\$ 6,911.74	postcards
1/28/2015		\$ 100.00	\$ 6,811.74	Spring Creek
1/28/2015		\$ 32.00	\$ 6,779.74	Photocopies
2/19/2015		\$ 20.24	\$ 6,759.50	invitations
2/26/2016	\$ 2,200.00		\$ 8,959.50	
3/16/2015		\$ 1,056.72	\$ 7,902.78	HyVee Catering - March Workshop
3/30/2015		\$ 182.60	\$ 7,720.18	Hartzell - Reimbursement for Sam's Purchase
3/30/2015		\$ 200.00	\$ 7,520.18	Speaker Fee - NE Czechs of Wilber
3/30/2015		\$ 200.00	\$ 7,320.18	Speaker Fee- Friedli
3/30/2015		\$ 200.00	\$ 7,120.18	Speaker Fee - Ptacek
3/30/2015		\$ 272.00	\$ 6,848.18	Chez Hay Catering
3/30/2015		\$ 1,002.60	\$ 5,845.58	Chez Hay Catering
3/30/2015		\$ 1.66	\$ 5,843.92	Office Depot
3/30/2015		\$ 284.04	\$ 5,559.88	Office Depot
3/30/2015		\$ 150.00	\$ 5,409.88	Co. Extn - Room Fee Reimbursement
4/8/2015		\$ 13.09	\$ 5,396.79	Photocopies
4/8/2015		\$ 38.00	\$ 5,358.79	Park & Go Vouchers
4/21/2015		\$ 200.00	\$ 5,158.79	Speaker Fee - Feeken
4/21/2015		\$ 116.14	\$ 5,042.65	S Hartzell - Reimbursement OfficeMax
4/23/2015		\$ 258.12	\$ 4,784.53	Copy Services Inv. 21231201503
4/23/2015		\$ 20.24	\$ 4,764.29	Postage
Revised 04/23/2015				
F:\Admin\Private\Budget\CIRD Grant Rev Expense Sheet.xls				