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## Get Up & Out! Get Going in Downtown Lincoln

*This summer, Downtown residents and visitors have numerous opportunities to GET OUT – specifically to get out and get active at outdoor events.*

*Some events happen weekly all or most of the summer.*

One of the most popular weekly events is the **Haymarket Farmers Market**. On Saturday mornings, 8:00 a.m. to noon, vendors and shoppers take over five blocks of barricaded streets in the vicinity of 7th, 8th, P, Q and Canopy streets. The market opened in May and is open every Saturday, rain or shine, through October 8th. To entertain the crowd, performers are featured at Iron Horse Park at 7th and Q Street from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m.

The **Lincoln Community Foundation Garden Performance Series** continues to enliven Wednesdays from noon to 1 p.m. through August 31st. Many a downtown worker and resident pack their lunch so they can listen while they eat in the shady Lincoln Community Foundation Garden at 1415 N Street.

Downtown's **First Friday Art Walks** incorporate support for local artists and exercise throughout the year. Of course, walking to the participating venues is more pleasant on a summer evening. For details about venues, visit the Downtown Lincoln Association website.

**Centennial Mall Garden Market**, at 301 Centennial Mall South, is jointly hosted by the NE Department of Agriculture and the NE Department of Health & Human Services. Open on Wednesdays from noon to 4:00 p.m. during June through September, the market provides farmers an opportunity to sell fresh produce in a worksite setting and increases access to fresh foods for downtown workers and residents.

**Summer Blend**, a free concert series in The Railyard on Canopy Street, will feature different musical performers every Thursday, from June 2nd through July 28th, from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

*June is an exceptionally busy month for downtown outdoor activities. The weekly recurring June activities include:*

Celebrating its 25th anniversary, **Jazz in June** will once again offer free musical performances on Tuesday evenings in June. The party begins at 5:00 p.m. with the "Jazz in June Market" at 12th & R Street. Then, at 7:00 p.m., attendees are invited to stroll onto the UNL campus north of the Lied Center, settle onto their blankets or chairs, and listen to some remarkable jazz musicians.

The Lincoln Children's Museum will be offering **Music & Mozzarella** on Thursdays in June. These free family concerts start at 5:00 p.m. with a KFRX pre-concert and pizza sales. Beginning at 6:00 p.m. musicians will entertain for about an hour — a good concert length for youngsters.

*There are also several one- to two-day outdoor events planned throughout the summer, some of which are in relatively new venues.*

On June 10th and 11th, **Celebrate Lincoln**, a music festival and party, will be held in the festival space just north of the Pinnacle Bank Arena, rain or shine. Ticket holders will enjoy fun-filled evenings with an excellent lineup of local and national talent. Gates open at 5:00 p.m. both days, with the final performers taking the stage at 10:00 p.m.

The **Relay for Life of Lancaster County**, a fundraiser for the American Cancer Society, will be held June 18th in the Railyard on Canopy St, from



Saturday morning in May at the Haymarket Farmers Market

4:00 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. The Relay is a community fundraising walk with teams of people taking turns walking around a track. Food, games and activities make it a family-friendly environment for the entire community. To participate or donate go to: [relay.acevents.org/](http://relay.acevents.org/)

The **2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Goodguys Speedway Motors Day at the Hay** will thrill car lovers on June 25th from 4:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. Ticket holders will see displays of over 1000 of the Midwest's finest 1972 and older hot rods, customs, classics, trucks, and muscle cars. This giant automotive festival will be held in the North Haymarket Festival and Sports District (403 Line Drive Circle).

Register by June 19<sup>th</sup> for the **2016 Trail Trek** experience. On June 26<sup>th</sup> bring your bicycle, helmet and your event packet to Haymarket Park, 403 Line Drive Circle. Join other cyclists as they tour Lincoln's trail network. All tours start and end at Haymarket Park. Funds raised will benefit city and county organizations that build and maintain the network of jogging, biking, walking and horseback riding trails in and around Lincoln.

While the **Uncle Sam Jam Independence Day** celebration isn't IN Downtown, the evening's fireworks are certainly very visible from many Downtown locations. City's official 4th of July celebration will include activities during the day at Oak Lake Park, just north of Downtown, and a fireworks display after dark. See [lincoln.ne.gov](http://lincoln.ne.gov), keyword: uncle sam jam.

Come **Party on the Plaza** at Union Plaza, 21st and O Street on August 13th, 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Family activities at this free event will have a "Lincoln Luau" theme. Check the Lincoln Parks & Recreation website for more details as the date approaches.

On August 18th – 20th, **Capital City Ribfest** will be the place to go for great food and live music. Ribfest will take place in the Pinnacle Bank Arena festival space, north of the Arena.

*Editor's Note: There's so much to do -- indoors and out, all year long -- in Lincoln. If you're wondering what's going on, I highly recommend the online calendar provided by the Lincoln Convention & Visitors Bureau. It is amazingly thorough and searchable by date, name, and keyword.*

# NEIGHBORWORKS-LINCOLN - 30 YEARS!

NeighborWorks Lincoln was “born” 30 years ago, in 1986. *Neighborhood Housing Services (NHS)*, as it was called then, spent its early years defining its scope and programs. By 1993, the organization focused its efforts on targeted inner city neighborhoods. In 1994, the organization became a chartered member of the *Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation*, a national network of similar organizations. Membership gave NHS access to financial resources, tools, training and the experience of hundreds of colleagues around the country.

In 1996, NHS moved to 2121 N. 27th Street and was renamed *Neighborhoods, Inc.* Over the following 20 years, the organization was, and continues to be, a leader in community development. It was among the first organizations in the nation to establish a homebuilding program for high school students and the first nonprofit organization in Nebraska to offer homebuyer education.

When the *Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation* became *NeighborWorks America* in 2005, Neighborhoods, Inc. was one of the first eight national affiliates approved to change its name to fully reflect the NeighborWorks brand, with a name change to *NeighborWorks Lincoln* (or *NWL*).

At their current location at 2530 Q Street, NWL continues to revitalize neighborhoods and promote homeownership. They offer homebuyer education, encourage community engagement, train neighborhood leaders, replace deteriorated homes with new, affordable housing, and provide jobs for local contractors and realtors.

In conjunction with National NeighborWorks Week in June — and NWL’s birthday — two local events are planned:

## Neighbor Powered Networks

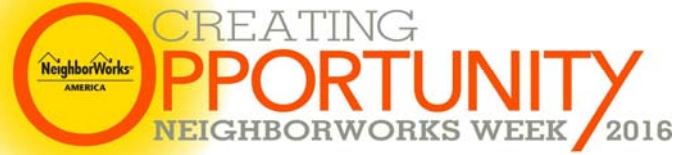
### **Wednesday, June 8th, 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. at 9th & D Street**

Local resident leaders will host a “hands on” event focused on sustainability and community engagement. Community CROPS will demonstrate how to start your own garden. City staff and environmental groups will provide recycling information. There will be food trucks, the Smoke House, music and “make it-take it” activities for youth. Building neighborhood connections will be an important part of the event — try out a new website connecting residents or participate in “Story Core” by sharing a story about your neighborhood.

### **Small House, Big Hopes in Hartley**

A little over a year ago, the 55 x 48 foot lot at 224 N. 28th Street in the Hartley Neighborhood was the site of a blighted rental house. The house was not financially feasible to rehabilitate. Demolition was a must, but what do you do with the empty non-standard lot? A community garden was considered, but long-term maintenance & sustainability was an issue.

Urban Development turned to *Affordable Housing Initiative (AHI)*, a nonprofit organization willing to work with a challenge. An owner-occupied house would be ideal — the parcel would be back on the tax rolls at a higher assessed value and the neighborhood would be improved. However, it would only be possible if a *Small House* concept could be approved. The approval process was complicated. Eventually, after the coordinated efforts of the entire Development Service Center and the guidance of Ed Zimmer and the Urban Design Committee, the *Small House* was approved. AHI and Urban Development are now ready to begin building the *Small House*, with financing from program income from the old Neighborhood Stabilization Program.



**3131 Starr Street, one of 35 new houses built by NeighborWorks Lincoln; 392 more were rehab'd by NWL over the past 30 years**

## House Warming

### **Thursday, June 9th, 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. at 2530 Q Street**

Come, help celebrate NWL’s 30th Anniversary! There will be food, music, face painting, and tours of the historic Reynolds house which now serves as NWL’s home office. As a tribute to those 30 years, there will be 30 works of art on display, focusing on “home matters” and available for purchase.

To learn more about NeighborWorks Week, to review an interactive map of NWL’s impact in Lincoln, and to learn more about programs and services offered, please visit: [nwlincoln.org](http://nwlincoln.org). To get more information on the schedule of events, contact Pat Anderson-Sifuentez at [patanderson@nwlincoln.org](mailto:patanderson@nwlincoln.org) or Marti Lee at [marti.lee@nwlincoln.org](mailto:marti.lee@nwlincoln.org).

## THE URBAN PAGE Volume 20, Issue 2 2nd Quarter, 2016

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# TIMELY TIDBITS

## Robber's Cave

*Blue Blood Brewery* opened in early May at its new location at 925 Robber's Cave Road, a site known by many Lincoln residents as *Robber's Cave*. The private/public partnership that brought the project to fruition began with approval of the Redevelopment Agreement by the Lincoln City Council in May 2015 between the City, Blue Blood Brewery and owner Brian Podwinski. The project included site acquisition, construction of a brewery and taproom (about 12,000 sq. ft.) and parking. The City became involved because of the historic nature of Robber's Cave. There was a community desire to see the cave renovated, restored, and re-opened for public tours, private events and brewery storage – one of its historic original purposes. The project broke ground August 27, 2015.

There is much local folklore and nostalgia for the cave. Some Lincolniters remember it from high school picnics, college initiations, tours by youth groups and general exploring. There's a story that Jesse James used it as a hideout. Pawnee Indians performed sacred rituals there and, later, settlers stayed in the cave. Restoring and reusing the cave for the barrel-aging program returns it to an earlier use: two brewers opened Pioneers Brewery in 1869. They enlarged the cave and tunnels to store their beer in the cool temperatures, only to go out of business in 1873. Efforts to designate the cave as a historical landmark have been unsuccessful due to the lack of historical documentation.

Cave restoration ran into a glitch when two northern long-eared bats were discovered — a federally-identified endangered species. The owner, Brian Podwinski, worked with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to ensure protection of the bats. A corner of the cave has been designated as bat habitat and closed to the public. Podwinski will be adding a screened area that will allow guests to view the bats during regularly and specially scheduled tours of the cave.

Total project cost was \$1,730,554. The City contributed \$130,000 in Tax Increment Financing which assisted with property acquisition.

## Review of 2016 Action Plan

The *2016 Action Plan* is available for public comment at [Lincoln.ne.gov](http://Lincoln.ne.gov), keyword: urban, in the "New!" box. The annual action plan details how federal entitlement funds—Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME, and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funds—will be spent from September 1, 2016 through August 31, 2017. The plan describes the programs and activities that address local needs in housing, homelessness, and neighborhood revitalization. For this coming year, federal entitlement funds will include \$1,701,414 in CDBG



Ambassador & President (A&P) ribbon cutting on May 5, celebrated the renovation of 71 affordable housing units in downtown Lincoln

(up 5.82% from last year), \$830,622 in HOME (up 14.48%) and \$144,736 in ESG (down 2.82 %). Public comments on the Plan must be sent to Urban Development by June 20, 2016.

## University Place South Plan

The *University Place South Redevelopment Plan* received unanimous approval by the Lincoln/Lancaster County Planning Commission in May and is scheduled for a City Council public hearing on June 13. The Plan area, generally bounded by 48th, 49th, Holdrege and Francis streets, also includes all of University Place Park. The former Tastee Inn and QP Hardware Store sites are part of the area, which was declared Blighted and Substandard in May 2016.

The centerpiece of the Plan is the *48<sup>th</sup> and Holdrege Redevelopment Project*, a mixed-use development that incorporates ground floor retail and restaurant space with about 98 units of market-rate housing on four upper floors. The project faces 48<sup>th</sup> Street with parking behind and garages and landscaping along 49<sup>th</sup> Street to buffer the development from the existing residential area to the east.

*GreenLeaf*, a local property company, and *Schafer Richardson*, a Minneapolis-based firm, are partnering as project developers. Private investment will be approximately \$16.4 million, with the City providing about \$1.7 million in tax increment financing (TIF). TIF uses are still being determined but may include property acquisition, site preparation, demolition, environmental remediation, façade enhancements and/or streetscape improvements. After City Council approval of the Plan, a Redevelopment Agreement



On April 23, approximately 150 cyclists gathered for the N Street Cycle Track grand opening with a ride from the east end of the protected bike way, at 23<sup>rd</sup> & N Street, to the Railyard in the Haymarket

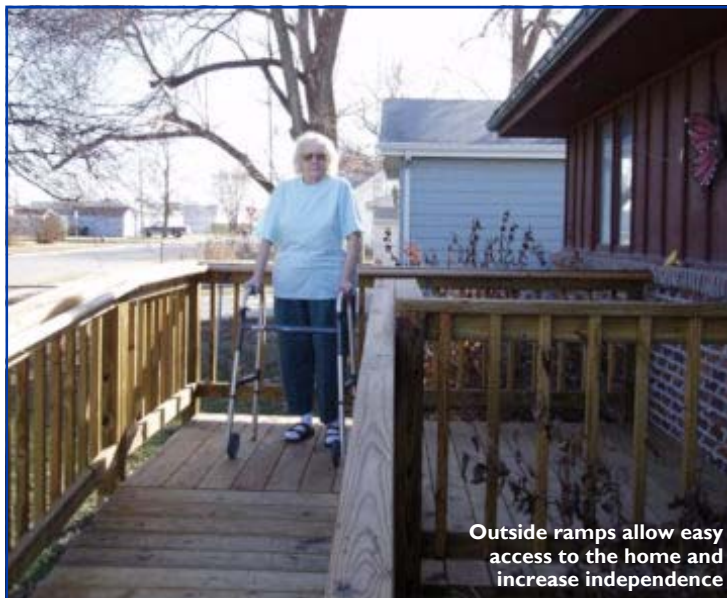
will need to be finalized and approved by the City Council. Site preparation is anticipated to begin this summer with completion expected in August 2017.

Should additional TIF become available in the future, other public improvements are also included in the Plan: replacing aging public utilities, resurfacing and paving substandard public streets, and sidewalk improvements. Possible University Place Park improvements include: improving or replacing the basketball/tennis courts/horseshoe area and resurfacing or paving the dilapidated parking lot.

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## THE LEAGUE REMOVES BARRIERS

Is it difficult for you or someone you know to get around in their house or apartment? Is it difficult to get things done? Home modification may allow you to live independently while remaining in your own home. The *League of Human Dignity* (or “*the League*”) may be the resource you’re looking for.

The League is a consumer-based nonprofit organization. Their mission is to promote the full integration of people with disabilities into society and to empower them to take charge of their own lives. To do that, the League advocates for their needs and rights while providing quality services that help them become and remain independent citizens.

One of those services, the *Barrier Removal Program*, receives CDBG funds through the City of Lincoln. Barrier Removal Grants are for people with low to moderate incomes (based on U.S. Housing and Urban Development guidelines) who need funds to remove barriers in their homes.

Renters also have the right to make reasonable requests of their landlord to make a rental house or apartment more accessible and safer. The landlord is not expected to pay for the modifications, but must make the accommodation possible. Examples of eligible modifications include outside ramps and lifts, grab bars, handrails, widened doorways, accessible tubs and showers, and reachable sinks and counters.

In addition to removing housing barriers, the League offers a variety of services to assist to people with disabilities.

- Information and referral
- Systems advocacy
- Individual advocacy
- Peer support
- Independent living skills training
- Transition from nursing facilities and other institutions into community-based living
- Assistance aimed at avoiding institutionalization
- Making the transition from secondary education to adult life
- Assistance in finding and paying for accessible housing
- Financial benefits counseling
- Equipment sales, repair, loan, and rental
- Assistance in hiring personal assistants and/or chore providers
- Grants (available in some communities) to make homes wheelchair accessible
- Services coordination for Nebraska’s Medicaid Waiver Program

In Lincoln, for more information or for an application for a Barrier Removal Grant, contact: Lincoln Center for Independent Living at 1701 P Street, Lincoln, NE 68508, phone 402-441-7871 or visit [leagueofhumandignity.com](http://leagueofhumandignity.com).