Annual Review 2019

Southeast Nebraska Development District
Global Perspective, Regional Value, Local Impact
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I find myself reflecting on this past year. It has certainly held a lot of change for SENDD with long time board members stepping down, the passing of friends and community champions, the reshaping of our district, and the flooding. Each of these weighs on my mind as I write this letter.

This past year, Nebraskans displayed their resiliency. Severe weather and flooding affected most of the state, including SENDD’s region. In fact, as I write this there are still communities in the southeast corner of the state that have standing water in their towns. This coupled with workforce, agriculture, infrastructure, and transportation challenges have made simple day-to-day routines difficult, testing our resolve. Yet, residents across the entire state have pitched in to help those in need. It truly makes me proud to serve the region and call Nebraska home.

In spite of these many challenges, the southeast corner of our state moves forward. This year, SENDD secured over $4 million in loans and grant resources, which was matched with $6.2 million in local and private sector funds. The result was 24 jobs created, 35 businesses assisted, and over 200 homes improved.

At the same time, we grew our services to include general contracting. This program originated after meeting with homeowners, community lenders, and elected officials. Our goal is to provide better service and improve efficiency of grant resources.

We could not do this without your support. As always, I want to extend an open invitation for all members to visit SENDD’s offices when you are in Lincoln or Humboldt. I encourage each of you to call me with your ideas, suggestions, and thoughts.

Tom Bliss
Executive Director

WealthWorks is a new approach to community development. To build a region’s wealth, WealthWorks considers not just financial assets, but includes the stock of all capitals in a region. This approach takes into account all the features of a city, town, countryside, or region that make it a good place to live, work, and visit. WealthWorks simplifies things by organizing these local features into eight discrete capitals: individual, social, intellectual, cultural, financial, built, political, and natural.

SENDD recognizes that advancing regional economic development requires a comprehensive approach. In other words, regional wealth means a lot more to us than ‘more money’.

Wealth includes local ownership and control of regional resources which creates a more resilient foundation of support. We want to help create a lasting livelihood for all people across the region, which means promoting shared values of health, respect, equality, and inclusiveness.

You can find these symbols throughout our review as a demonstration of how each type of capital has been impacted over the last year.
SENDD has continued to focus on meeting southeast Nebraska's housing needs. This year we continued our work through: Revolving Loan Funds (RLFs), Purchase, Rehab, Resale (PRR), Owner Occupied Rehabilitation (OOR), Downpayment Assistance, and Rural Workforce Housing Programs and a new Contracting service.

This year SENDD assisted with funding for a number of downtown revitalization projects in member communities. New paint and storefronts in York give community members a sense of pride and are sure to attract customers to local businesses.
SEND Contracting is excited to announce the formation of SENDD Contracting, a general contracting service. Initially our primary focus will be on siding, roofing, gutters, and windows. SENDD Contracting is equipped with numerous years of high-level construction experience. The organization will specialize in general contracting services for residential and commercial projects in southeast Nebraska. Our goal is to meet customers’ construction needs through quality workmanship and building value, while maintaining meaningful and successful relationships.

Our intention within the SENDD member communities is not to compete with local contractors, but to supplement existing services and to fill a void when needed. SENDD Contracting will offer regional services within the SENDD district as well as in other areas in southeast Nebraska including preconstruction consultation, job site and project management, administrative support, and document control. We will evaluate projects for constructability, provide cost estimates, maintain project scheduling, and work with property owners to exceed quality and time objectives. We will suggest effective means of construction and select the quality subcontractors for each project. We will constantly monitor and evaluate subcontractor performance and quality in order to provide the best service to our clients. We will maintain full-time superintendents who are responsible for all inspections, reviewing the quality and timeliness of work performed, conducting progress meetings, and maintaining continued communications with property owners and clients.

SEND Contracting is comprised of the current SENDD Housing team, which has, successfully managed over 1,100 residential and commercial construction projects. In the past year alone, the SENDD Housing team has generated over $2.5 million in total project allocation.

Based on the experience of our team, distinguished record of success, and the ongoing regional need for the group’s abilities and assistance, SENDD Contracting will take the necessary steps to serve a broader clientele and to diversify its talents. SENDD Contracting is an insured, licensed and registered contractor in the state of Nebraska with 25 years in general contracting and project management skills. Please let us know how we can assist in your community or region. We look forward to successful partnerships with area communities and agencies.

USDA Section 502 Home Loan Program
The USDA Section 502 Direct home Loan Program assists low-income Nebraska residents in obtaining safe and sanitary housing in eligible rural areas. Additionally, funds can be used to build, repair, renovate, or relocate a home. SENDD currently has three staff members qualified to assist those interested with the application.

Eligible applicants can typically expect low interest rates (3-4%), no down payment, and a 33 year loan term.

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$251,862.00 Maximum Loan Amount in Nebraska

Income Limits

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Income Limits

$251,862.00 Maximum Loan Amount in Nebraska
SEND is currently operating three nuisance abatement programs within the district. Aside from the overall benefits of community cleanup, nuisance programs are also critical stepping stones for communities seeking to apply for streets or housing-related grant funding. The successful implementation of nuisance programs demonstrate a community’s willingness to help themselves, which becomes especially important when applying for grant funding. Earlier this year, SEND completed the Village of Bradshaw’s (York County) phase one nuisance program. Since then, several other communities have reached out to SEND seeking information about the program. SEND provides this service as a nonbiased, third-party assessment to communities struggling with nuisance properties. These impartial inspections alleviate the possibility of local tension between municipalities and their residents. To date, SEND has successfully completed seven nuisance abatement programs in the district.

**Inspection Services**

The SEND Housing staff is now extending Lead Paint Testing services and Housing Quality Standards (HQS) inspections to communities, housing organizations, and residents in the region. These inspections are current requirements of all Federal and State funded grant programs and are performed as part of the grant contract to ensure that all assisted properties meet or exceed minimum quality standards outlined by HUD. We are now opening up these services to the entire region. We have over 15 years of inspection experience and have several staff members trained and certified to conduct Lead Paint Testing and HQS inspections. We are also anticipating adding an International Code Council (ICC) Certified Building Inspector within our staff enabling us to provide building code and safety inspections. We are excited to offer these new services throughout the region and look forward to this opportunity.

**Member Services**

**Housing**
- Owner Occupied Rehabilitation (OOR)
- Purchase, Rehab, Resale (PRR)
- Nuisance Abatement Program
  - Civil/educational code enforcement
  - Down Payment Assistance Loans
  - Housing Needs Plans
  - Housing Conditions Studies
  - Lead-based Paint Inspections
  - Cleanup activities required by HUD

**Community Development**
- Block Grants
  - Application, planning, administration
  - Community & Civic Center Financing
  - Economic Development & Leadership Certified Community
- Household Income Studies
- Community Needs Assessment
  - Workforce Availability Studies
- Project Specific Environmental Review
- Strategic Planning

**Economic Development**
- Revolving Loan Fund
  - Financial tool designed to increase economic activity, community development, and create job opportunities in rural communities
  - Fixed interest rate between 4-6%
  - GIS Mapping/Location Intelligence
  - Support businesses and communities with analytical decision making
  - Custom asset/infrastructure mapping
  - Business competition mapping and analysis
  - Market reports/analysis

**Emergency & Disaster Relief**
- Business Resiliency Workshops
  - Knowledge and skills to mitigate and protect businesses from disasters
- Flood and Floodplain Management
- Assist communities to meet National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) guidelines
- Potential insurance premium discount for Community Rating System communities
- Funding
  - Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA)
  - United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)
  - Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

Over the last 5 years, SENDD has generated a return on investment of ~$40 for every $1 in membership dues.

Over the last 5 years, SENDD has obtained funding for 120+ projects totaling over $45,000,000.

Over the past decade, SENDD has assisted members to leverage more than $220,100,000 in private investment for economic development initiatives that support job creation and retention efforts.

In the past decade, SENDD has been involved in local projects that have retained over 650 jobs and created over 1,024 new jobs.
The Downtown Revitalization Program through Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) has brought major changes to Downtown York. In 2016, the City was awarded funds to develop a Downtown Revitalization Plan. In 2017, the City was awarded funds to assist in the implementation of priority projects outlined in the plan. In 2018, the City began the Downtown Revitalization Façade Improvement/Commercial Rehabilitation Program with CDBG assistance. This program provided financial assistance for the improvements of 10 buildings in downtown York, with private investment totaling over $130,000. Projects focused on restoring, renovating, replacing, or reconstructing facades, structural repairs, exterior building repairs, and internal code compliance of buildings. The perception of the overall appearance of downtown is largely tied to the quality of the downtown buildings and this program has allowed York to greatly improve their downtown district while also stabilizing any structural issues that may have existed in the storefronts of these buildings.

The Village of Fairmont has undergone many changes over the last ten years. With the help of grant funding, an ambitious Village Clerk, a caring community, and a dedicated SENDD staff, 20 homes have been rehabilitated since 2014. A total of 4409,716 was invested in the rehabilitation of these 20 homes, averaging 23,486 per rehab project. To make this happen, the Village of Fairmont and SENDD worked together to submit an application for the Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation Program, whose funding is awarded by the Nebraska Department of Economic Development. Linda Zuerlein, Village Clerk, distributed information packets to Fairmont citizens about this great opportunity.

Several pre-applications were received and paired with the Village’s demonstrable need and strong application, they received funding to rehab 6 homes during the initial grant period. The program has continued to grow. The majority of the rehabbed homes underwent a complete makeover like the ones pictured below. The Taylor family is very pleased with their newly renovated home. “We are so proud of our home now. We no longer have the ugly house on the block,” said Terre Taylor, homeowner.
Nebraska City and SENDD lost a friend this past year. Ted Beilman inspired others to dream big and accomplish amazing things. Ted was a native Nebraskan who spent much of his life in Phoenix and Alaska. After retiring, he and his wife, Gloria Glover, returned to his childhood hometown of Nebraska City where they both quickly became involved in the Missouri River community. Gloria ran for office and became the city’s Finance Commissioner in 2015. Ted focused his attention on local projects such as Riverview Nature Park, the Arbor Academy Childcare and Education Center, and Nebraska City’s Veteran’s Memorial Building, which became his labor of love.

The Veteran’s Memorial Building first opened in 1929 as a memorial to veterans of World War I and the Spanish American War, and served as a community center for decades. However, in 2007, the facility was closed due to disrepair. Ted recognized the value of this magnificent space and all the memories it held for many Nebraska City residents, particularly veterans, so he began working to save the Memorial Building. Working 60 or more hours per week, Ted was successfully petitioned to add the building to the National Register of Historic Places in March 2016. He worked to incorporate other community leaders to create a nonprofit organization and secure grants and local pledges to help with renovation efforts. Between these activities, Ted began gathering memorabilia from across military families in Otoe County. These items were later displayed throughout the Memorial Building honoring those that served our country.

Ted passed away in March 2019. SENDD staff had the privilege of working with him beginning in 2017. During those two years, we assisted Ted and Nebraska City in preparing a handful of successful grant applications for the Veteran’s Memorial. A portion of roof was replaced, windows were restored, accessibility issues were addressed, and all of these accomplishments generated more community interest. Ted and city staff were always available and ready to help. Nebraska City continues this work in Ted’s memory.

The Veteran’s memorial Building celebrates the local dedication to preserving our freedom during wartime. The building also encourages activities that foster a feeling of solidarity. Places that uphold values of freedom and solidarity are rare, they can’t be built without strong leadership and shared vision. Thanks to Ted’s work this amazing space will continue to inspire others.

What has made Fairmont successful in reaching the goals of the last two Owner-Occupied Rehab Programs?
Our citizens choose to be educated on the process, which allows them to communicate with others within the Village. With the initial success of the 2013 grant cycle, homeowners began to take notice and ask questions as to how they may be able to get involved in future OOR programs. We hold group talks where Fairmont citizens can get together, ask questions, and discuss how to get an application filled out. Also, with social media becoming more accessible, rehab participants are posting photos of their renovations, communicating with others online, and educating each other about the program.

What have you noticed from others in the community that don’t qualify as low-to-moderate income?
There have been so many individuals in town who have taken it upon themselves to hire contractors to install new siding, new windows, or even landscaping to keep up with all of the renovations going on through the OOR program. There has always been a sense of pride within the community and these programs have helped bring out the care and effort this community strives for.

Where did your passion for Owner-Occupied programs come from?
I have lived through many of the financial obstacles that show up as a homeowner. Whether it is high utility costs, or how am I going to afford a new roof that my house desperately needs, or how am I going to install new windows to have more affordable utilities? People just need financial assistance in order to address these common situations in older homes that are prevalent in small communities. And the OOR program provides the necessary financial support to make these renovations possible.
RotorWings Aviation, LLC was founded by Thayer County local Kevin Mitchell in 2015. RotorWings understands the importance of the agricultural community and pride themselves in serving area farmers.

In 2018, SENDD assisted RotorWings in purchasing a helicopter, spray equipment, and navigation equipment for their operation through our loan program. Thayer County Bank and Thayer County Economic Development Alliance were key partners in the project. The company primarily serves Thayer County and the surrounding area but has contracted with cooperatives in several Nebraska counties in the past, as well as applicators in North Dakota, Kansas, Iowa, and Indiana. This project will allow the business to increase their capacity and market and increase employment and economic opportunities in Thayer County.

Falls City Foods

Falls City Foods in Falls City processes, exports, imports and trades animal by-products, serving the pet food and animal feed industries. The facility is located in the Industrial Park at 404 Pacific St., in the former Gold Star Sausage plant. In 2017, The City of Falls City was awarded $305,000 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding from the Nebraska Department of Economic Development to assist the Colorado-based company Great West—Teeuwissen, LLC, d/b/a Falls City Foods in redeveloping a vacant facility to meet their needs.

Falls City Economic Development and Growth Enterprise (EDGE) also provided $75,000 in private funding to assist the business. The project included $1.7 million in capital investment for the acquisition of the building and the purchase of equipment to make the facility operational. The project wrapped up in 2018, with the company successfully completing the requirements of the CDBG program by creating over 20 full-time-equivalent (FTE) jobs in Falls City, Nebraska.
At the annual NEDA Conference on June 13th, Jonathan Jank received the Professional of the Year award. Jonathan has been involved with many development and other professional organizations over the years and is a great partner to SENDD. In addition to his role as President and CEO of the Seward County Chamber and Development Partnership, Jonathan also serves as the chairperson of the NEDA Scholarship Committee, Nebraska Chamber of Commerce Executives Scholarship Committee, and as Co-Chairperson for Connecting Young Nebraskans. SENDD and Jonathan have partnered on several projects over the years, including Seward’s Downtown Revitalization, street improvements in Utica, and helping Milford become a Certified Leadership Community.

Jonathan is truly inspirational with his dedication to economic and community growth in Seward County and the State of Nebraska. SENDD and the communities we serve are fortunate to have professionals like Jonathan in our corner of the state.

Dr. Daryl Long stepped down from the SENDD Board of Directors after many years of service representing Peru State College, where he has served as a non-governmental representative on the Board since 2010. Previously, Dr. Long served as a board member for River Country Economic Development, the seven county Economic Development Administration (EDA) district that eventually merged to form SENDD.

A longtime resident of the Peru, Nebraska area, Dr. Long was a faculty member at Peru State College for 50 years. He earned his Bachelors and Masters degrees from Iowa State University and his doctorate from the University of Nebraska. He arrived at Peru State College in the summer of 1965 to teach a three-week course on conservation for elementary teachers while he was finishing his thesis. Dr. Long was eventually persuaded to take a position at Peru State College in January of 1967 to teach calculus and analytical chemistry. During his time on campus, Dr. Long enjoyed getting to know students, faculty, and staff in the small tight-knit college community. His courses eventually broadened to include additional subjects such as nuclear science, alternative energy, and ethanol production. Following his retirement in 2017, Daryl Long was named Professor Emeritus in Mathematics.

In addition to his dedication to education, Dr. Long is an active farmer and pilot. He has also served as a board member for many other organizations including Tri-State Missouri River Tourism, the Peru Chamber of Commerce, the Nemaha County Development Corporation, and Nemaha County Hospital. Dr. Long enjoys piloting his 1973 Cessna throughout the southeast Nebraska area.
Much of our district has been impacted by the natural disasters including flooding and straight line winds in March 2019. Since the initial storms, SENDD has been working to help our communities identify partners for restoration and mitigation projects. As the waters have continued to surge along the Missouri River, our communities continue to seek relief and assistance.

The closed roads are the most visible signs that remain. Communities continue to work to restore their water and wastewater systems, seeking funding partners and solutions. Unseen are the businesses that have seen decreased traffic into their stores or employees struggling to commute to work through detours. SENDD is working to assist communities in their recovery efforts and provide assistance whenever possible.

Debris left behind by receding flood waters coats a bench and blankets the waterfront area in Peru, NE.

Many roads and bridges damaged by flood waters are still closed.

Debris left behind by receding flood waters coats a bench and blankets the waterfront area in Peru, NE.

**2019 Flooding Impact**

Much of our district has been impacted by the natural disasters including flooding and straight line winds in March 2019. Since the initial storms, SENDD has been working to help our communities identify partners for restoration and mitigation projects. As the waters have continued to surge along the Missouri River, our communities continue to seek relief and assistance.

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Debris left behind by receding flood waters coats a bench and blankets the waterfront area in Peru, NE.

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**Estimated Costs of the 2019 Flooding in NE Have Reached $1.3 Billion**

**APPENDIX**

**Anticipated 2020 Deadlines**

- CCCFF LOI: January 15
- CCCFF Application: February 15
- Nebraska Affordable Housing Trust Fund: April
- CDBG Economic Development: Open Cycle, May
- CDBG Emergency Threat: Open Cycle, May
- CDBG Tourism Development: Open Cycle, May
- CDBG Water/Wastewater: Open Cycle, May
- CDBG Public Works: August
- CDBG Downtown Revitalization: September
- CDBG Owner Occupied Rehab: September
- CDBG Planning: October
- Land & Water Conservation Fund: October

**Additional Resources**

- Black Hills Energy (BHE)
- Blue Valley Community Action Partnership (BVCA)
- Economic Development Administration (EDA)
- National Association of Development Organizations (NADO)
- Nebraska Business Development Center (NBDC)
- Nebraska Community Foundation (NCF)
- Nebraska Department of Economic Development (NDED)
- Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT)
- Nebraska Economic Development Association (NEDA)
- Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA)
- Nebraska Housing Developers Association (NHDCA)
- Nebraska Investment Finance Authority (NIFA)
- Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD)
- Nebraska Regional Development Commission (NRDC)
- Omaha Public Power District (OPPD)
- Partners for Progress/Stronger Economies Together (PPSET)
- Rural Enterprise Assistance Project (REAP)
- Southeast Community College (SCC)
- Southeast Nebraska Community Action (SECA)
- University of Nebraska Rural Initiative
- US Small Business Administration (SBA)
- US Department of Agriculture (USDA)
Every five years, SENDD is required by the Economic Development Administration to facilitate the revision of the regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. SENDD updated this important guiding document in 2018. You can find it on our website, or contact us for a bound copy!

Our New Website

We’ve updated our website and are continuing to grow our online resources for our communities. This new site is better equipped to provide our communities with valuable information in an easier to navigate layout. Click through to see what we are doing in our communities!

Liz Cody
Community Development Specialist