



June 2008

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Cozad and Gothenburg Receive Downtown Revitalization Projects

New State Strategy to Support Downtown Revitalization in Pilot Communities. \$135,000 Awarded for Phase 1 Downtown Planning.

LINCOLN, NEB. (June 3, 2008)—The Nebraska Department of Economic Development (DED) is implementing a new, aggressive two-pronged approach to holistic revitalization or redevelopment of downtown infrastructure, and it has invited Cozad, Gothenburg, Nebraska City, Sidney and Wayne to pioneer the process for other communities across the state.

For the first time, DED is infusing CDBG funds into communities for developing downtown strategic revitalization studies, to be immediately followed up with CDBG funding for implementing the planned results in those same communities. The maximum CDBG amount for Phase 1 (Planning) is \$30,000 per community, and is taken from the Department's Planning Category. Earning awards are:



click here to read Cozad and Gothenburg synopses and remainder of story

FEATURE: Nebraska Plastics Est. 1945 of Cozad is North America's Oldest Family Owned Plastics Extrusion Company

Nebraska Plastics, the manufacturer of Country Estate Fence, Deck and Railing, was established in 1945 as one of the first plastic extrusion companies in North America. Milo German, The founder of the company, invented the use of siphon tubes to irrigate crops in the Platte Valley. These products quickly spread though out North America and many foreign countries. Milo started using plastics for his siphon tubes because aluminum was unavailable due to the war effort. Since its inception, Nebraska Plastics has been an innovator in above-ground, weatherable plastic products. Nebraska Plastics revolutionized the irrigation industry again when they developed the first above ground gated irrigation pipe. These products were designed with UV protection to endure the harsh weather and with durability to withstand rough treatment from farmers and landowners. Nebraska Plastics produced the world's first PVC fence in 1978 and is now the oldest family owned plastics extrusion company in North America.

Today, Country Estate Products require the same UV and impact durability as the early PVC irrigation products. Many of the first products made by Nebraska Plastics are still in use today. Our industry-leading, 50-year non-prorated warranty on Country Estate Vinyl Fence, Deck and Railing products is a result of engineering and experience. Nebraska Plastics is the oldest family-owned plastic extrusion company in North America. We use the knowledge gained over the past 63 years to produce the industry's premier fence, deck and railing products. Our company is committed to offering products at a competitive price without compromising quality. Even though price is important, we understand that "value" encompasses much more than the lowest price.


The first Country Estate fence is still in use today. Since Nebraska Plastics revolutionized the fence industry, we have been innovators in designing products that increase the value of our customers' properties. Country Estate Products are engineered to allow our customers the ability to enjoy their beauty for many, many years. All Country Estate Vinyl Fence, Deck

and Railing products are produced with 100% virgin compounds that are scientifically formulated to meet our customers' highest expectations.

In 2006, we proudly introduced our complete line of Country Estate aluminum fence and railing products. Our aluminum products are a perfect low-maintenance complement to our existing line of vinyl products.

Country Estate Products are sold throughout the world by authorized independent distributors and dealers. When selecting representatives, we search for individuals who will become installation

experts and who are committed to excellent customer service.

The best fence, deck and railing products are only as good as the person who installs them. You can view more of our products and find a local dealer by visiting our web site at www.countryestate.com. By specifying both Country Estate vinyl and aluminum on your construction projects you will get products backed by the best customer service, raw materials and warranty on the market today. 


www.countryestate.com



Dawson Area Development Announces New Dawson County Spec House Program

Dawson Area Development (DAD) has developed a new program to help with the risk area contractors have when building a speculative house. The intent of this program is to cover some or all of the interest cost in building a speculative house, including construction interest and interest that may accumulate while the house is being marketed. The program is being administered by the DAD office. Individual communities that are DAD members may give preference to applications that plan to build the house in certain areas of their city and address the need for moderate income housing.

Dawson County recently contracted with Hanna:Keelan Associates, P.C., a professional planning firm to complete a Housing Market Study. The Housing study determined the five-year housing demand for the communities of the Dawson County area to be 384 owner and 202 rental homes. The demand factors in the growth of the area along with the number of substandard housing units that need replaced. The demand also factors in the results of individuals surveyed that desire to change their status from renter to owner or vice-a-versa.

The program guidelines specify the size and value of the house, and time limits for interest cost payment. Copies of the guidelines and applications are available at the Dawson Area Development office at: 209 W. 8th Street in Cozad, by calling (308) 784-3902, or by emailing djad@cozadtel.net 

Dawson County Area Housing Market Study, Preliminary Version Complete

The final Dawson County Area Housing Market study will be available in July for public and research purposes. All village and city offices will have a final study at that time for public use.

Also a housing fair will be held in July where each community will be showcased in regards to potential housing development sites or subdivisions. Funders, developers, contractors, and community representatives will be invited to participate in this fair. For more information contact:
Deb Jensen - Community Development Coordinator
Dawson Area Development
308 784 3902 or djad@cozadtel.net 

Marty Mahler, Ph.D. - Nebraska P-16 Coordinator Presents to Dawson County Business and Education Leaders

LEXINGTON CLIPPER HERALD - Danny Gruber

Does the educational system in Nebraska prepare students to survive in the new global economy? Marty Mahler, Ph.D and director of the P-16 Program at UNL addresses this question.

A highly sought-after speaker, Mahler was in Lexington Wednesday, May 14th at the invitation of Superintendent Todd Chessmore. Mahler's presentation was titled "Nebraska's Future: Growing Our Own" and was geared toward getting the audience to think about educating Nebraska's youth. Mahler said, students need to learn to collaborate, rather than compete, in the new global economy.

In Nebraska, for every 100 high school freshmen, only 83.8 will graduate on time, says Mahler. Fifty percent of those 100 will go to a two-year or four-year school and only 34.7 percent of those will still be around after their first year. Out of those original 100 students, less than 25 will earn an associates degree in three years or a bachelor's in six years. Mahler isn't down on Nebraska, however. "In fact," said Mahler, "We do tenth best in the country. In Arkansas, the number of college grads drops down to 15.3 percent."

But in Nebraska for years the Cornhuskers were on top, rarely out of the top ten. Well, it's a lot easier to prevent something rather than cure it, said Mahler.

China, Russia, and India combined have over three billion people, said Mahler. Ten percent of those, about 300 million, are highly educated people. The United States, on the other hand, has about 75 million highly educated people, about 25 percent of its total population of 300 million.

While we as the U.S. have a higher percentage of students graduating from college, other countries such as, China, Russia, and India, simply have the U.S. outstripped in numbers. "The USA faces greater competition in the future than anytime in history," said Mahler. To illustrate his point, Mahler introduced a slide show highlighting statistical data on what the competition studies in school. In China, Russia and India the science and technology graduates number 39.7 percent. In the U.S., that number drops to 16.7 percent.


"We are losing our competitiveness. How will this impact our communities in Nebraska?" asked Mahler. Growing the future of the state of Nebraska begins with our students, Mahler stated. Big businesses are not going to be the salvation of the state.

The innovation, he said, will be with Mom and Pop businesses incubated right here.

Mahler cited an off-shore website specializing in what used to be known as "Get Friday" services where businesses can outsource secretarial needs to a virtual secretary. When launched in 2005, the site had one desk and fewer than 100 clients. Now with 1200 clients and 140 employees, 95 percent of the business originates from U.S. clients. Why, Mahler wonders, can't a service like that not be located here. It can be located anywhere, in Lexington, Brady, or any small town because it's a knowledge-based service, not an industrial one, dependent on availability of natural resources.

The key to growth in innovation is education, Mahler said. There are lots of things that could be done to achieve the ability to collaborate in the coming global economy, but if the focus needed to be narrowed to one thing, it would be to raise the education of minorities to the level of their Caucasian peers where the obstacle is often financial.

Mahler touched on a theory in Michigan called the Kalamazoo Promise. Any student who attends Kalamazoo Public for grades K-12 gets a free ride to college. Even students who moved into the area are eligible for scholarship benefits. In fact, just attending school for grades 9-12 will garner the pupil 65 percent of their tuition paid. Money is generated from an anonymous donations. The only strings to the donation are that the student must live in Kalamazoo and attend a Michigan public university or community college and maintain a 2.0 average while progressing towards a degree or certification. To the 12,000 students and to the town, the offer of a free ride scholarship for its youth has kick-started the stagnant economy left for dead by the decline of the auto industry. Housing is up over six percent, 30 positions were created within the school district alone and new life has been breathed into the community.

CBS' Katie Couric showcased the efforts of the school district on national television and now other school districts, such as El Dorado, Ark., are following suit. After showing the CBS footage on the Kalamazoo Promise, Mahler looked to the business leaders gathered in the city council chambers Wednesday afternoon and asked, "Why can't Lexington? Maybe the first year you only can afford to send 10 students to school, maybe a few more the next year. In five years, maybe you're sending a hundred. Things are being done that have never been done before," he concluded. 

Dawson County Receives Housing Groundbreaker Award

The Nebraska Housing Developers Association Awards Dawson County for Local Investment in Affordable Housing

Dawson County was one of two local Nebraska communities honored by the Nebraska Housing Developers Association at the Southwest Regional Housing Summit held June 3 at the Village Café in Grant. Dawson County and Imperial received 2008 Groundbreaker Awards from the Association for making local investments in affordable housing development.

In a rapidly developing area of the state, Dawson County communities are working in a model collaborative effort to address housing needs in the region. Dawson Area Development staff and civic and community leaders from the area's three largest cities, Cozad, Gothenburg, and Lexington, as well as seven smaller villages have connected on a number of projects designed to benefit each community and the larger region.


A county-wide housing study has just been completed to assess housing needs and ways to address those

needs. Results from the study will be incorporated into plans for suggested housing projects. Current projects already in progress include a fifteen home rent-to-own construction project with five affordable homes scheduled to be built in each of the communities of Lexington, Gothenburg and Cozad. Plans also call for the possibility of including spec homes and duplexes. Another unique program soon to begin for the area is the Spec House Risk-Sharing program. The program offers guaranteed payment of interest costs for builders meeting specified guidelines.

Last year, a well-established, award-winning program, ABLE (Advocating for Business Labor Education) sponsored a home in Lexington built by a high school construction class. Professional builders from the area offered their expertise in working with the students. Ongoing projects include administration of owner-occupied rehabilitation in Lexington, and REACH-approved homebuyer education classes offered ten

months out of the year; half are presented in English and half in Spanish to meet community needs.

- Members of the Dawson Area Development Housing Committee include: Joe Pepsplitsch, Lexington City Manager; Susan Kloeping, Cozad City Clerk; Jeanne Janssen, Gothenburg Housing Authority; John Fagot, Lexington Mayor; Mark McKeone, DAD Board of Directors; Vicki Halligan, CBS Real Estate; Bruce Clymer, Gothenburg City Administrator; Carl York, Cozad City Administrator; Rick Zarek, Gothenburg; Pat Hosick, Cozad Housing Authority; and Diane Adams, Lexington Housing Authority.

"These communities have formed partnerships to make affordable housing development a key economic development strategy and a cornerstone for future growth," said Danielle Hill, Executive Director of the Association. "We want to thank these community leaders for their collaborative, visionary action and commitment to community development." 

Understanding Generational Tendencies in the Workplace

Matures, Baby Boomers, Generation X, and the Millenials View Work Very Differently. Understanding is a Key to Success.

Most all of us have had the opportunity to work with members of all 4 generations currently in the workforce. I am sure my experience has not significantly been different than yours. We all learn from these experiences, but continuing to learn and educate ourselves as to these differences in generational attitudes can be a very proactive approach to creating an attractive (recruitment), productive (profitable), and satisfied (retention) work environment for all involved.

Since I have been at Dawson Area Development I have really tried to better educate myself as to the current status and future direction of our workforce. I personally find these topics very interesting and would believe that most business and education leaders in the area, if not already, would value information on various workforce topics as well. Awhile ago I sent out an email regarding Generational Studies to get some feedback from area businesses. Since then we have attained some various media from Robert Wendover from the Center for Generational Studies on this topic that I would like to make available to anyone on a check out - check in style basis so contact me for information.

For now here are some generic characteristics of the generations currently in the workplace.

MATURES (born prior to 1946) • dedicated to their jobs • respect authority even if it frustrates them • place duty before pleasure • willing to wait for a reward, patience is a virtue • honor and integrity are critical to their being • reluctant to challenge the system • resistant to change and will go to lengths to avoid it.

BABY BOOMERS (born 1946 - 1964) • live to work • general sense of optimism • size of this generation has allowed them to have an unprecedented influence on government and consumer products • willing to go into debt, betting on future income • tend to be team and process oriented, sometimes to the detriment of results • strive for convenience and personal gratification • nostalgic about their youth and want to preserve it.

GENERATION X (born 1965 - 1980) • work to live rather than live to work • jobs are viewed as a contract • clear and consistent expectations are essential • opportunity for growth will lengthen tenure • need a sense of contribution while having fun • earning money is part of a larger equation which includes contribution to the whole • versatility provides security.

MILLENNIALS (1981 - 1999) • conditioned to live in the moment • accustomed to the immediacy of technology and expect everything from it • clear and consistent expectations are essential for productivity • earn money for the purpose of immediate consumption • demonstrate respect only after they have received it • question everything • astoundingly diverse demographically.



Change is one guarantee. Addressing constant change is one way we all as individuals can secure a future for our students in the area.

I would like to create some dialogue between business and education throughout the area by providing periodic information to you regarding this and other similar issues via a group email list that I can create. Please let me know if you would like to participate in this group. Thank you. John Bell • jbdad@cozadtel.net

Click here to view THE AGE OF THE MILLENNIALS, Morley Safer's latest story on the increase of Millenials entering and impacting the workplace. Scroll down on the right to locate the story.



Cozad and Gothenburg Receive Downtown Revitalization Projects - cont.

•**COZAD**—\$28,200 CDBG. Of 90 commercial buildings in downtown Cozad, approximately 35 percent now stand empty and in disrepair. A good 65 percent of the buildings were constructed more than 40 years ago and city officials realize they can't attract tenants until the buildings are refurbished, and in some cases, partitioned to better serve the needs of smaller business owners. The empty buildings also have negatively impacted attendance at a nearby museum. An additional \$8,900 will come from the Cozad Chamber of Commerce, City of Cozad, Board of Public Works, Business Improvement District, Cozad Development Corporation and downtown businesses.

•**GOTHENBURG**—\$28,200 CDBG. Gothenburg officials knew downtown improvements needed to be made as early as 1992 and maintaining the city's historic integrity was high on their list. In 1995, Gothenburg was selected to participate in the Nebraska Lied Main Street program, which gave it the foundation to enact change. However 39 of 84 downtown buildings remain blighted and substandard. One problem is visitors' first impressions. The city hopes to tackle façade improvements, unattractive gateways to downtown, blighted alleyways, and spruce up Highway 30 among other projects. An additional \$8,900 will come from the City of Gothenburg.

Other award winning communities include: Nebraska City, Sidney, and Wayne.

The maximum CDBG amount for Phase II (Project Implementation), which will follow in approximately six months, will be \$250,000 per community, and drawn from the Department's Economic Development Category.

The new Downtown Revitalization Category is open to incorporated Nebraska municipalities of populations 20,000 or less, having earned designations as Economic Development Certified Communities, and having already adopted comprehensive plans, zoning and subdivision ordinances, building codes, code enforcement, and building permit processes.

For information, contact Steve Charleston at 800-426-6505, 402-471-3757, or steve.charleston@nebraska.gov

Dawson Area Development Leadership Program Applications are Now Available

It's back by popular demand....the Dawson Area Development (DAD) Leadership Program is again taking requests for applications for the 2008-09 class.

The deadline for requesting an application is June 27, 2008. A completed application will be due back to the DAD office by July 25, 2008. Interviews for potential class members will be completed in August and the

class will officially begin September 3, 2008. There will be twelve required class days during this class term. Out-of-Dawson County trips will be the CNPPID Water Tour and a Lincoln visitation of the Legislature and Nebraska Correctional Facility.

To request more information or a brochure, contact Deb Jensen at (308) 784.3902 or djad@cozadtel.net

[click here for application located on pages 5 and 6 of the newsletter](#)

SAVE THE DATE

Wednesday, July 9th, 2008

Lakeside Country Club - Johnson Lake

DAD Industry Appreciation Day

Everyone's schedule is busy so we wanted to let you know the date of the Annual DAD Industry Appreciation Day.

Please save July 9th on your calendars.

- 1:00 p.m. - 18 hole, 4 man scramble, golf tournament
- 3:00 p.m. - pitch tournament for non-golfers
- 6:00 p.m. - steak dinner

Please mark your calendars, a registration will follow in June. Jennifer Wolf, Dawson Area Development

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DAWSON
AREA DEVELOPMENT

LEADERSHIP

MISSION

Dawson Area Development Leadership is a personal development program designed to motivate participants to develop and enhance the quality of their leadership skills in addressing pertinent community needs.

GOALS

1. To develop awareness of the Dawson Area community, its problems, challenges and opportunities, by examining the major systems which contribute to patterns of life in the area.
2. To develop leadership skills and qualities in participants which lead to creative and insightful community solutions.
3. To ensure broad community future leadership by recruiting diverse participants who are emerging leaders.
4. To motivate and encourage participants to assume leadership roles in community affairs.

2008-2009 SCHEDULE

DATES

TOPICS

September 3, 2008	Program Introduction
October 1, 2008	Quality of Life
November 5, 2008	Government/Energy
December 3, 2008	Education
January 7, 2009	Health/Human Services
February 4, 2009	Business and Industry
March 4, 2009	Agriculture
April 1, 2009	Legal/Law Enforcement
April 2009	Water Tour
May 6, 2009	Becoming a Community Leader
May 2009	State Prison and Legislature Visit to Lincoln

PARTICIPANTS

Dawson Area Development Leadership Advisory Committee will make a conscious effort to select participants from the Dawson County area who represent a cross section of the area in terms of sex, race, age, occupation and community groups. The diversity among participants generates meaningful interaction and learning in the leadership program. Dawson Area Development Leadership actively seeks applicants from all segments of the area. The class size is limited to 20.

www.dawsonareadevelopment.com

www.dawsoncounty/careers.com

SELECTION CRITERIA

Final participant selection is made by the Dawson Area Development Leadership Advisory Board on the basis of a written application and interview process. Participants will be selected so that the group represents diversity of occupations, community interests, ethnic background and age groups.

NOTIFICATION

Once members of the Dawson Area Development Leadership are selected and confirmed, all applicants are notified by mail as to whether or not their application was successful.

TUITION

Tuition for the 2008-09 program is \$200 per participant and payable upon selection. Tuition can be paid by the participant's employer or sponsoring organization. Tuition is NON-REFUNDABLE.

APPLICATION DEADLINE

Application requests must be received by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, June 27, 2008 at the Dawson Area Development Office, P. O. Box 106, 121 East 8th, Cozad, NE. 69130. For additional information call Dawson Area Development at 784-3902.

APPLICATION REQUEST (this form is not the application)

NAME _____

COMPANY/OCCUPATION: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

EMAIL: _____ PHONE: _____



Please send a request for a D.A.D. Leadership Application to:

Detach and return to: Dawson Area Development
or email to: djdad@cozadtel.net
P.O. Box 106
Cozad, NE 69130

Application requests must be received for the 2008-2009 session by June 27, 2008

LEADERSHIP ADVISORY BOARD

2008 - 2009

Dave Stenberg, Chairperson
Dawson County Extension Educator
and DAD Board member

Nathan Wyatt, Gothenburg
Gothenburg St. Bank Investment Center

Susan Kloepping, Cozad
City of Cozad

Barb Batie, Lexington
Crooked Creek Farm

Rusty Sutton, Lexington
Plum Creek Medical Group

Kirk Riley, Cozad
1st Bank and Trust



DAWSON
AREA DEVELOPMENT

STAFF

Jennifer Wolf
DAD Executive Director

Deb Jensen
DAD Community Development Coordinator

John Bell
ABLE Coordinator

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www.dawsoncounty/careers.com



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LEADERSHIP

2008 - 2009

*"Ask not what your county
can do for you, ask what you
can do for your county"*