

NEBRASKA MUNICIPAL REVIEW

■ Interlocal cooperation works;
Bellevue, Plattsmouth agree to connect
cities with walking/biking trail

■ Thriving Broken Bow is renovating
library, building new fire station

■ Hickman is among fastest growing
communities in state

NOVEMBER 2017



Gering, Scottsbluff city officials say TIF projects are critically important for redevelopment and success in their communities, ultimately increasing the valuation significantly to help fund local governments, especially schools!

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About the Cover: Top left: Cobblestone Hotel next to Gering Convention Center. From left: Gering Mayor Tony Kaufman; Lane Danielzuk, Gering City Administrator; Karla Niedan-Streets, Gering Tourism Director; Starr Lehl, Scottsbluff Economic Development Director; Nathan Johnson, Scottsbluff City Manager; Cindy Dickinson, Scottsbluff City Clerk; and, Randy Meininger, Scottsbluff Mayor. Top right from left to right: The Elite Health Center in Scottsbluff. Karla Niedan-Streets, Gering Tourism Director; Starr Lehl, Scottsbluff Economic Development Director; Scottsbluff Mayor Randy Meininger; Katie Camacho, Operations Manager, Webb Property Management; Gering Mayor Tony Kaufman; Cindy Dickinson, Scottsbluff City Clerk; Lane Danielzuk, Gering City Administrator; Nathan Johnson, Scottsbluff City Manager. Photos by Lynn Rex, Executive Director, LNM. Bottom: New Cobblestone Hotel in downtown Gering is one of the projects made possible through Tax Increment Financing. Photo by Jerry Purvis, Scottsbluff Star-Herald. Reprinted by permission.

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CALENDAR

Utilities/Public Works Section Annual ConferenceJan. 17-19, 2018, Cornhusker Marriott Hotel, Lincoln
Midwinter Conference.....Feb. 26-27, 2018, Cornhusker Marriott Hotel, Lincoln
Municipal Accounting and Finance ConferenceJune 20-22, 2018, Graduate, Lincoln
Annual Conference.....Sept. 19-21, 2018, Holiday Inn, Kearney

Municipal Legal Calendar

(All statute citations to Revised Statutes of Nebraska)

NOVEMBER 2017 CITIES OF THE FIRST CLASS

First day.....Class C liquor license year begins. (53-124)
Within 15 days of Passage.....Clerk publishes ordinances passed. (16-405)
Within 10 days from meeting
or before next meeting
(whichever is sooner).....Clerk to have minutes available for public inspection. (84-1413)
Within 30 days from
Council meeting.....Clerk publishes official proceedings of meetings including claims. (19-1102)
End of month.....Clerk files monthly report. (16-317)
Within 20 days after end of month. Treasurer files monthly financial report. (16-318)
* *Clerk must prepare agenda prior to next Council meeting. (84-1411)
Reminder1 and 6 year plans are due at the Nebraska Department of Roads no later
than March 1, 2018. (39-2115 to 39-2119)

CITIES OF THE SECOND CLASS AND VILLAGES

First day.....Class C liquor license year begins. (53-124)
Within 15 days of Passage.....Clerk publishes ordinances passed. (17-613)
Within 10 days from meeting
or before next meeting
(whichever is sooner).....Clerk to have minutes available for public inspection. (84-1413)
Within 30 days from Council
or Board meeting.....Clerk publishes official proceedings of meetings including claims. (19-1102)
Within 20 days after end of month. Treasurer files monthly financial report. (17-606)
* *Clerk must prepare agenda prior to next Council or Board meeting. (84-1411)
Reminder1 and 6 year plans are due at the Nebraska Department of Roads no later
than March 1, 2018. (39-2115 to 39-2119)

Nebraska Municipal Review Editor and Advertising Sales: Lynn Marienau, 402-476-2829 or lynnm@lonm.org

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Great municipal projects throughout Nebraska Financed by various combinations of TIF, LB 840 and/or CCCFF!

BY L. LYNN REX, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, LNM

Thanks to the Cities of Gering and Scottsbluff for inviting me to give a regional workshop or “mini-conference” at the Gering Civic Center on Oct. 30. City officials from Gering and Scottsbluff asked me months in advance to discuss topics and laws they wanted addressed during the training session. Special thanks to **Kathy Welfl**, Gering City Clerk, who worked with the League to develop the final agenda. Well in advance of the meeting date, Kathy notified municipal officials in surrounding cities and villages about the date and agenda. Thanks to her extraordinary efforts, there was a tremendous turnout of numerous municipalities from western Nebraska. It was great to see so many municipal officials interested in receiving updated information on the Open Meetings Act, laws governing public records and the Nebraska Accountability and Disclosure statutes relating to conflicts of interest.

Besides having the pleasure of visiting with so many municipal officials from member cities and villages, I also had the opportunity to tour several impressive tax increment financing (TIF) projects in Scottsbluff and Gering. Although I am frequently in both cities, I usually am there to attend a meeting or give a presentation and then must return to Lincoln for other commitments. Thanks to the following municipal officials who took time from their busy schedules to showcase some of their most recent TIF and LB 840 projects: **Gering Mayor Tony Kaufman**; **Scottsbluff Mayor Randy Meininger**; **Lane Danielzuk**, Gering City Administrator; **Nathan Johnson**, Scottsbluff City Manager; **Cindy Dickinson**, Scottsbluff City Clerk; **Starr Lehl**, Scottsbluff Economic Development Director; and **Karla Niedan-Streeks**, Gering Tourism Director.

In this issue of the *Review* on page 6, are two game-changing projects that would not have been possible without TIF. The **Cobblestone Hotel** is across the street from the Gering Civic Center. This incredible new hotel, which opens in December, will enable the Gering Civic Center to host even larger conferences and training workshops. The Cobblestone Hotel was in the final stages of construction during our tour. The beautiful décor and high-tech guest

rooms complement the high-tech meeting rooms with full amenities throughout the facility. Gering used TIF and LB 840 funds to help finance this tremendous facility. In addition, Scottsbluff also has a new **Fairfield Inn & Suites**, a Marriott facility, which also would not have been possible without the use of TIF. Coupled with other existing hotels, these facilities solidify Scottsbluff and Gering as the premier conference centers in western Nebraska.

Another big project is the **Elite Health Center** in Scottsbluff, an amazing medical center with multiple providers and specialties. The Elite Health Center would not have happened without TIF to provide funding for the site development. In fact, owner Jason Webb told a *StarHerald* reporter that, “TIF is the only tool that can get a project of this magnitude done.” Scottsbluff also used LB 840 funds to help finance the project. The Elite Health Center enables patients to conveniently schedule appointments with their optometrist, dentist, physical therapist and other medical professionals in one location. The project is an anchor in the formerly “blighted and substandard” area that is attracting even more commercial development and investment in the surrounding property. It is a great recruitment tool for Scottsbluff and Gering, which compete with Fort Collins, Colo., and Rapid City, SD.

These are only some of the many transformational projects in Gering and Scottsbluff that would not have occurred “but for” TIF, substantially increasing the valuation of the property when the bonds are paid off. There are so many terrific projects funded across the state with a combination of TIF, LB 840 funds and/or funds from the Civic and Community Center Financing Fund (CCCFF). These types of projects create jobs and have huge secondary benefits to the regional economy. **As with any TIF project, the school district is the political subdivision which benefits the most from the increased property valuation.** In most areas of the state, about 60-65 percent of every tax dollar funds the local school district(s). ■

Prepare now for the first CCCFF deadline of Jan. 15 for the “Letter of Intent to Apply”

CIVIC AND COMMUNITY CENTER FINANCING FUND

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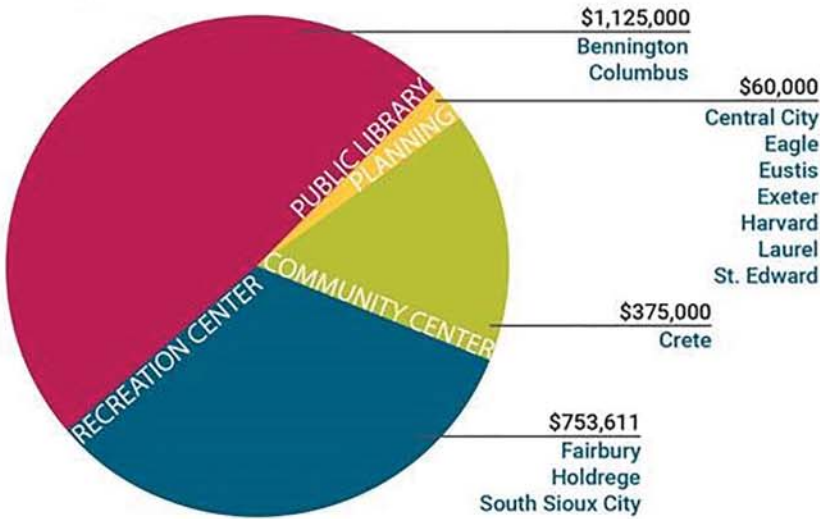
TAKE A LOOK

The Civic and Community Center Financing Fund (CCCFF) program provides grants and state aid for the development of civic, community, and recreation centers. The CCCFF program supports, enhances, and grows the Good Life throughout Nebraska.

| 2018 GRANT SCHEDULE DUE DATES | |
|-------------------------------|-------------|
| LETTER OF INTENT TO APPLY | JANUARY 15 |
| FULL APPLICATION | FEBRUARY 15 |

Contact your Nebraska Department of Economic Development representative Jenny B. Mason at 402-471-6280 or email jenny.mason@nebraska.gov to learn more about the CCCFF opportunities in Nebraska!

OVER \$2.3M CCCFF FUNDS AWARDED IN 2017



GROWING NEBRASKA BY



Economic developers say TIF has been a success

■ **BY JERRY PURVIS**
STAFF REPORTER
SCOTTSBLUFF STAR-HERALD ■

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SCOTTSBLUFF – When the issue of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) returns to the floor of the Nebraska Legislature in January, local economic developers want to have the numbers they need to prove it's been a help to the state.

To come up with those numbers, the Nebraska Economic Developers Association (NEDA) is reaching out to communities, housing organizations and other partners to help fund a study of how effective TIF projects have been over the past 10 years.

TIF used as incentive

TIF is often used to incentivize developers to redevelop blighted or substandard areas in cities where development has stalled. The resulting increased property tax values helps with city growth.



The Elite Health Center in Scottsbluff is another game-changing project which would not have been possible without TIF. From left to right: Karla Niedan-Streeks, Gering Tourism Director; Starr Lehl, Scottsbluff Economic Development Director; Scottsbluff Mayor Randy Meininger; Katie Camacho, Operations Manager, Webb Property Management; Gering Mayor Tony Kaufman; Cindy Dickinson, Scottsbluff City Clerk; Lane Danielzuk, Gering City Administrator; Nathan Johnson, Scottsbluff City Manager. Photo by Lynn Rex, Executive Director, LNM.

Recent TIF projects in the area have resulted in the new Cobblestone Hotel in Gering, which will open Dec. 8.



From left: Gering Mayor Tony Kaufman; Lane Danielzuk, Gering City Administrator; Karla Niedan-Streeks, Gering Tourism Director; Starr Lehl, Scottsbluff Economic Development Director; Nathan Johnson, Scottsbluff City Manager; Cindy Dickinson, Scottsbluff City Clerk; and, Randy Meininger, Scottsbluff Mayor. Photo by Lynn Rex, Executive Director, LNM.

The Elite Health Center, the Fairfield Inn and Reganis Motors in Scottsbluff are other examples, as well as interest shown for an upcoming hotel at the Weborg Centre on the 10th Street in Gering.

Showcased projects

Scottsbluff Economic Development Director Starr Lehl showcased some of those projects to other members of the League of Nebraska Municipalities during a League mini-conference on Oct. 30 in Gering.

"All the business owners told us those projects would not have happened without TIF funding," Lehl said. "League administration was very impressed with what we've been able to accomplish."

NEDA has received a proposal from Ernie Goss, a professor with the Heider College of Business at Creigh-

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Continued from page 6

ton University. His study would document success stories of how TIF projects have helped with growth and development in communities across the state.

Lehl said the results of the study are needed to help make the case for continued (authority) from the Legislature during the next session. Because of some cases of abuse, several state Senators are calling for elimination of the program.

"There are a few cases where TIF funding has been misused, so that's where the program gets a bad rap," Lehl said. "Communities like ours actually have the need to develop some of our blighted and substandard sites."

Legislation introduced

State Sen. John Stinner of Gering introduced legislation last session that would allow TIF to be used to support workforce housing development in communities outside Lincoln and Omaha. The bill was filibustered and votes to advance the legislation weren't there.

Stinner said he will (seek passage of LB 496) in the 2018 session because available workforce housing is needed to bring new businesses into the community.

"Nebraska doesn't have a lot of economic development tools it can use," Lehl said. "We have TIF and the LB 840 funding that comes from sales tax. The state's Nebraska Advantage program is available, but that's come under scrutiny as legislators continue to make budget cuts."

With documentation from the TIF study, NEDA members plan to testify before the Legislature on the importance of keeping the program, which can be used to develop both housing

and commercial projects.

"It will be kind of a push to get the study completed for the next legislative session, which is only 60 days,"

Lehl said. "We're now in the process of getting financial support from members to get it completed." ■

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Nebraska's volunteer spirit

BY GOV. PETE RICKETTS

You will often hear me say that Nebraska is the best place in the world to live, work and raise a family. One of the features that helps make the Good Life so great is Nebraska's tradition of service to others through volunteerism. Nebraskans everywhere have a long history of deep commitment to their schools, their churches and their communities. When Nebraskans see a need, they go and meet that need. It's what we do.

Every day, people and volunteer organizations across Nebraska carry out acts of service that enrich the lives of both the volunteers and the people they serve. These people and organizations have long played a role in strengthening not only Nebraska, but our entire country. Alexis de Tocqueville recognized the American propensity for volunteerism and wrote about it extensively in his classic work, "Democracy in America." De Tocqueville observed this about American volunteerism: "I have seen Americans making great and sincere sacrifices for the key common good and a hundred times I have noticed that, when needs be, they almost always gave each other faithful support."

While Alexis de Tocqueville wrote that in 1840, that spirit lives on in the work of Nebraskans today. Look

around and you'll see countless examples of Nebraskans stepping up and helping out those in need. More than 33 percent of Nebraskans volunteered in 2015, ranking us sixth among the 50 states and Washington D.C., according to the Corporation for National & Community Service. We volunteer at a rate much higher than the national average of around 25 percent. Their work added up to more than 58 million hours and an estimated \$1.3 billion in value for Nebraska in 2015 alone.

It's not hard to volunteer in Nebraska. There are more than 1,000 registered volunteer organizations in our state and numerous other volunteer organizations and faith communities. I encourage each and every one of you to get involved with at least one of these programs. Volunteers play a vital role in our lives by strengthening the social fabric of our society.

Here are some great stories of Nebraskans who are serving their state.

The TeamMates Mentoring Program,

Volunteers play a vital role in our lives by strengthening the social fabric of our society.

started in 1991 by Coach Tom Osborne and his wife Nancy, works to inspire youth to reach their full potential through mentoring. Coach Osborne saw his football players as high-achieving role models who generations of kids looked up to. He wanted their example to make an impact on the lives of young Nebraskans.

Coach Osborne took 22 football players to middle schools in Lincoln to be mentors. Their initial success encouraged them to grow the idea. When it became an official program in 1998, TeamMates had 12 chapters and 441 mentors matched with mentees. Today, TeamMates has grown to over 150 chapters and serves more than 8,000 Nebraska students. The TeamMates program has extended beyond Nebraska's borders as well, with chapters in Iowa, Kansas and Wyoming.

Bill and Evonne Williams of

Continued on page 15

Lincoln's StarTran receives federal grant for electric buses

\$1.45 million grant also will fund charging stations, transformer, staff training

StarTran has received a \$1.45 million grant to purchase two electric buses that will replace heavy-duty diesel buses. The grant is from the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Transit Administration (FTA) through the Low-or No-Emission (Low-No) Vehicle Program.

StarTran's project was one of 51 projects in 39 states selected for \$55 million in grants. Lincoln's new electric buses will be used on routes that connect residents to employment opportunities. The grant will also fund electric charging stations, a transformer and staff training. The grant will be matched by \$500,000 in local funds.

Enhance reputation

"This project will further enhance StarTran's reputation as a transit industry leader in the use and promo-

tion of alternative fuels," said Transit Manager Mike Davis. "As we replace older vehicles, our focus continues to be on diversifying our fuel resources and cutting emissions." Davis said the electric buses will save on fuel costs and reduce carbon emissions by 1,690 tons over their 12-year life span. He said the reduced emissions are equivalent to removing 27 cars from the road. The electric buses are expected to be delivered in late 2018 and in service in early 2019.

Current fleet

StarTran's current fleet includes 67 full-size buses and 13 HandiVans. Nearly one-third of the vehicles will use Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) by spring 2018. That includes 13 buses, two trolleys and 11 HandiVans. CNG offers increased environmental benefits, operates more quietly than diesel and on average, costs less per gallon than diesel.

FTA Acting Administrator K. Jane Williams said the projects were selected through the highly competi-



Photo by © Thinkstock.com.

tive Low-No program. "As transit providers nationwide face a backlog of maintenance needs, it is imperative to replace aging buses near the end of their useful life with newer, cleaner models that also are more efficient to operate and maintain," she said.

Project partners

Davis thanked the project partners, New Flyer and Lincoln Electric System, as well as those who helped with the grant application: U.S. Senator Deb Fischer, U.S. Rep. Jeff Fortenberry, the StarTran Advisory Board, Lincoln Metropolitan Planning Organization, Center for People in Need, Malone Community Center, Indian Center Inc., and Lutheran Family Services.

For more information on StarTran, visit startran.lincoln.ne.gov. ■

Source – City of Lincoln

Lincoln ranks 3rd for best quality of life in NerdWallet study

NerdWallet ranked Lincoln third out of 177 U.S. cities with more than 150,000 residents for quality of life. NerdWallet used data estimates from the 2016 U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey. The staff analyzed the number of hours worked, commute times, percentage of income spent on housing, health insurance coverage, poverty levels and unemployment rates to get a picture of quality of life in each location.

NerdWallet reported that Lincoln is tied for 10th lowest unemployment

rate and it's relatively affordable with median gross rent that is 33 percent of monthly income – making it 25 out of 177.

The city ranked in the top 40 percent in all six of the quality-of-life metrics examined.

The state also appears to be a welcoming place, NerdWallet stated. Nebraska took in 76 refugees per 100,000 residents in 2016, the most of any state, according to a Pew Research Center study. ■

Source – NerdWallet

Look at the League's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/leaguene Be sure to "Like" us



Bringing guns to work

BY JERRY L. PIGSLEY, WOODS & AITKEN LLP,
LONM LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT LAW COUNSEL

Recent mass shootings in Las Vegas and Texas demonstrate to municipalities the need for you to reexamine how your employees are protected from gun violence. Employees now may seek to protect themselves from gun violence by bringing a handgun to work.

“GUN FREE” ZONES

Do you have a “no weapons” policy prohibiting employees from possessing a firearm on municipal property, including your parking lots? If so, you may want to review that policy to ensure it is compliant with governing laws. Nebraska state law provides a “permitholder may carry a concealed handgun anywhere in Nebraska, except any: police, sheriff or Nebraska State Patrol station or office; detention facility, prison or jail; courtroom or building, which contains a courtroom; polling place during a bona fide election; meeting of the governing body of a county, public school district, municipality or other political subdivision; meeting of the Legislature or a committee of the Legislature; financial institution; professional or semiprofessional athletic event; building, grounds, vehicle or sponsored activity or athletic event of any public, private, denominational or parochial elementary, vocational or secondary school,

a private postsecondary career school as defined in Section 851603, a community college, or a public or private college, junior college or university; place of worship; hospital, emergency room or trauma center; political rally or fundraiser; establishment having a license issued under the Nebraska Liquor Control Act that derives over one half of its total income from the sale of alcoholic liquor; place where the possession or carrying of a firearm is prohibited by state or federal law; a place or premises where the person, persons, entity or entities in control of the property or employer in control of the property has prohibited permitholders from carrying concealed handguns into or onto the place or premises; or into or onto any other place or premises where handguns are prohibited by state law.” Neb. Rev. Stat. § 692441(1)(a).

POSTING NOTICE

The municipality, as an employer in control of the property, can prohibit a permitholder from carrying a concealed handgun into or onto the premises open to the public, but must post a conspicuous notice that carrying a concealed handgun is prohibited in or on the place or premises or makes a request, directly or through an authorized representative or manage-

ment personnel, that the permitholder remove the concealed handgun from the place or premises. Neb. Rev. Stat. § 692441(2).

GUNS IN CARS

State law allows a permitholder to carry a concealed handgun in his or her vehicle or on his or her person while riding in or on a vehicle into or onto any parking area of places where they are not otherwise allowed to carry a concealed handgun, unless doing so violates federal law. Neb. Rev. Stat. § 692441(3). The permitholder is not prohibited by state law prior to exiting his or her vehicle, locking the handgun inside the glove box, trunk or other compartment of the vehicle, a storage box securely attached to the vehicle or, if the vehicle is a motorcycle, a hardened compartment securely attached to the motorcycle. *Id.*

State law allows a municipality to prohibit its employees or other persons who are permitholders from carrying concealed handguns in vehicles owned by the municipality. Neb. Rev. Stat. § 692441(4).

PREVENTIVE MEASURES

Municipalities need to state in their employee handbooks whether employees will be permitted or prohib-

Continued on page 11

Economic forecasting board lowers revenue projections at October meeting

The Nebraska Economic Forecasting Advisory Board Oct. 27 voted to lower revenue projections during a meeting at the Capitol. The board provides an advisory forecast of general fund receipts that the Legislature relies on to draft state budget proposals. (The 2018 session begins Jan. 3 and is a 60-day, or short, legislative session.)

Revenue projections for the current fiscal year and the upcoming FY 2018-19 were lowered mainly because of expected decreases in individual income tax receipts of \$115 million in FY 2017-18 and \$125 million in FY 2018-19.

Total projected revenue receipts for FY 2017-18 were lowered to \$4.5 billion, a decrease of \$100 million. Projected total revenue receipts for FY 2018-19 were set at \$4.7 billion, a decrease of \$123 million.

The upshot of the revised forecast is a projected general fund that is \$194.4 million below the statutory cash reserve minimum.

Results of the forecast and other pending adjustments will be reviewed during a mid-November meeting of the Tax Rate Review Committee.

The next Nebraska Economic

Forecasting Board meeting is scheduled for Feb. 28. ■

Source – Unicameral Information Office

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Labor and Employment Law Counsel to the League of Nebraska Municipalities



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Bringing guns to work

Continued from page 10

ited from bringing concealed weapons to the workplace. Municipalities need to establish policies toward workplace violence and harassment and encourage employees to report any person who violates these policies. Finally, municipalities should encourage their employees who are stressed to seek assistance through their employee assistance program to avoid having a problem become a more serious one leading to a tragedy. ■

Editor's Note: This article is not intended to provide legal advice to our readers. Rather, this article is intended to alert our readers to new and developing issues and to provide some common sense answers to complex legal questions. Readers are urged to consult their own legal counsel or the author of this article if the reader wishes to obtain a specific legal opinion regarding how these legal standards may apply to their particular circumstances. The author of this article, Jerry L. Pigsley, can be contacted at (402) 437-8500, jpigsley@woodsaitken.com, or at Woods & Aitken LLP, 301 S. 13th Street, Suite 500, Lincoln, NE 68508-2578.

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Interlocal cooperation works; Bellevue, Plattsmouth agree to connect cities with walking/biking trail

■ **BY JOE MANGIAMELLI**
CITY ADMINISTRATOR
BELLEVUE ■

A brainstorm of Bellevue Mayor Rita Sanders and Plattsmouth Mayor Paul Lambert has proven the point of interlocal cooperation. The idea was to connect the two communities by a walking/biking trail.

Bellevue has been working for several years to extend the levee south to the city to protect Offutt Air Force Base. It only made sense that the levee surface should be used as an extension of the city's trail system. Plattsmouth was looking at improving the city trails north of the city. The mutual interests focused then on crossing the Platte River midway between the two cities.

Both cities on board

With both cities on board, it seemed logical that the counties representing the cities be engaged and then, the Natural Resources Districts serving both areas. Synergy and consensus to keep moving forward on what sounded like a great opportunity to showcase the cities and areas adjacent to the river grew. The river crossing question was asked of the Nebraska Department of Transportation (DOT) to determine if the Platte River bridge crossing off Highway 34 could be modified to accommodate the crossing.

The department supported the project with one provision, the work would have to be undertaken as part of the bridge construction so as to avoid a second traffic closure or traffic restriction on the new highway if



Image showing project area provided courtesy of Metropolitan Area Planning Agency (MAPA).

constructed at a later date. That made sense and draft agreements were circulated to lay out preliminary terms and responsibilities of each governmental entity. When completed, Bellevue, Plattsmouth, Cass and Sarpy Counties, Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District and Lower Platte South Natural Resources District had all expressed support.

DOT to build girders

DOT committed to constructing the 26 girders necessary to span and support the trail between the north and south abutments as a first phase of the bridge project. That requirement was incorporated into the Interlocal Cooperation Agreement (ILA) executed by the parties in September. The Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District is taking the lead in working with the state for the pur-

pose of securing federal assistance for this first phase of the project. While not a party to the Interlocal Cooperation Agreement, the Metropolitan Area Planning Agency has taken on a leadership role in helping coordinate the federal funds application process.

Federal assistance sought

The ILA provides for the second phase for federal assistance to be sought for the trail itself extending from Bellevue south to Allied Road and from Plattsmouth north to Beach Road. The second phase will be undertaken in several years once federal assistance is secured. The estimated cost of project phases one and two is just under \$2 million each with federal assistance covering 80 percent of eligible costs. Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District will provide the

Continued on page 13

City of Norfolk employee recognized at national conference

Todd Boling, City of Norfolk Water Pollution Control Superintendent, recently received recognition at a national conference.

The Water Environment Federation (WEF) recognized Boling as an outstanding volunteer, a part of its new Volunteer Service Recognition Project, at the recent Water Environment Federation's Annual Technical Exhibition and Conference. This program honors members who significantly contribute to the successes and achievements of the organization by serving on a WEF committee or in the WEF House of Delegates.

The criteria to receive this award include the following: must be a

member of WEF for a minimum of five years; provide significant contributions to WEF via leadership above and beyond in a committee, task force, workgroup, or sub-group of a committee; significant and/or substantial service to a committee or workgroup; and, contribute unique, innovative or creative perspectives to a committee or workshop.

Boling has been involved at the national level and has responsibilities that include organizing four conferences around the country. He is the Community Practice Director of Outreach and Innovation as well as Delegate at Large for the House of Delegates.

"Todd's honor for his volunteerism to the WEF to educate and train professionals to clean water and return it safely to the environment is meritable. Todd always approaches his job



Todd Boling, City of Norfolk Water Pollution Control Superintendent. Photo courtesy of City of Norfolk.

as Wastewater Superintendent with knowledge and passion to provide the best for this community," said City of Norfolk Human Resource Director, Sheila Schukei. ■

Source – City of Norfolk

Interlocal cooperation works

Continued from page 12

local match (20 percent) of phase one construction; each of the participating governments will contribute a portion of the local match required for phase two.

Operation and maintenance

The cities and counties will, before initiation of phase two construction, enter into an agreement for operation and maintenance of the trail once constructed. The close cooperation of eight entities working toward a common goal exemplifies the importance of using the Interlocal Cooperation Act in improving our communities. It worked well in this project; hopefully, it can serve as a model for projects in other areas of the state. ■



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Hickman is among fastest growing communities in state

■ BY CHRISTY ABRAHAM, LEGAL COUNSEL, LNM ■

With a recently opened community center and a new housing development of more than 200 new homes, Hickman is a growing community. In fact, Hickman is one of the fastest growing municipalities in the state and boasts that 40 percent of its residents are under the age of 25.

The beautiful new community center includes the Reading Centre, city offices, kitchen, bar and multi-purpose area. The multi-purpose area has a capacity of 680 people and can be used for large receptions, youth activities and sporting events. The community center was financed, in addition to other funds, with a USDA Rural Development Community Facilities Loan, a sales tax for public infrastructure and a grant from the Civic and Community Center Financing Fund.

Hickman continues to expand in other ways with a revitalization of the downtown and the addition of parks and trail systems. Hickman has around four miles of trails and recently finalized the 2016 Hickman Trail Master Plan to extend and improve the existing trail network. ■



Hickman City Council Chambers. Photo by Christy Abraham, Legal Counsel, LNM.



Reading Centre in Hickman Community Center. Photo by Christy Abraham, Legal Counsel, LNM.



Hickman Trail System. Photo by Christy Abraham, Legal Counsel, LNM.



Kitchen in Hickman Community Center. Photo by Christy Abraham, Legal Counsel, LNM.



Basketball court in Hickman Community Center. Photo by Christy Abraham, Legal Counsel, LNM.

Nebraska's volunteer spirit

Continued from page 8

Patriotic Productions are another great example of Nebraska's volunteer spirit. Bill and Evonne worked to create "Remembering Our Fallen," a traveling display which honors the memory of those who have made the ultimate sacrifice in defense of our great nation. With the help of the *Omaha World-Herald* and Bellevue University, Bill and Evonne opened "Remembering Our Fallen" in front of a crowd of over 1,000 people. The memorial has been traveling weekly throughout Nebraska since January 2011.

The spirit of volunteerism starts

at a young age for Nebraskans, who faithfully pass this tradition on from generation to generation. Sophia Stroud, a third-grader from Omaha, was flipping through an American Girl catalog one day and noticed that one of the dolls was bald. Sophia immediately asked her mom as to why the bald dolls were made and who they were for. After Sophia's mother explained to her that the dolls were for kids who have cancer or who have lost their hair, Sophia took it upon herself to raise money and purchase these dolls for patients at Children's Hospital and Medical Center. Sophia baked cookies with the help of

her grandmother and raised over \$1,400 in one month by selling them. This money allowed Sophia to donate eight dolls and six Build-A-Bear teddy bears to children in the hospital.

It's an honor to be Governor of a state with such a strong commitment to volunteerism. Your acts of service make Nebraska the best place in the world to live, work and raise a family. If you have a story about volunteerism that you would like to share, I would love to hear from you. Please call my office at 402-471-2244 or email me at pete.ricketts@nebraska.gov. ■

Thriving Broken Bow is renovating library, building new fire station

■ **BY CHRISTY ABRAHAM**
LEGAL COUNSEL, LNM ■

Broken Bow, a city of the second class, is the county seat of Custer County. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the geographic center of Nebraska lies about 10 miles northwest of Broken Bow.

The Broken Bow Commercial Square Historic District, centered on the public square, is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The city boasts 126 total acres of parks in the city park system, a new Aquatic Center and numerous playgrounds. ■



Broken Bow is in the process of building a new fire station in partnership with the rural fire protection district. Photo by Christy Abraham, Legal Counsel, LNM.

*Downtown Square.
The beautiful downtown square in Broken Bow was recently renovated including new playground equipment and the restoration of the historic bandstand. Photo by Christy Abraham, Legal Counsel, LNM.*





Library renovations. The old library is going through major renovations, including an expansion of the children's area and adding a multipurpose community meeting room. The library is expected to reopen in January 2018. Photos by Christy Abraham, Legal Counsel, LNM.



Arrow Hotel. Broken Bow boasts two amazing hotels on its downtown square: Arrow Hotel and Arrow East. Arrow East recently had a grand opening. The new lodging was built in the place where a 2007 fire destroyed much of the south side of the downtown square.

Grand Island seeks volunteers for parks, recreational facilities, public library

The City of Grand Island is seeking volunteers to help maintain and build an even higher quality of life in Grand Island's parks, recreational facilities and public library.

Through the volunteer program, residents have a variety of options and ways to volunteer, either as a group or as an individual, or on an ongoing basis or just once. No matter how often or in what way time is spent volunteering, one thing is certain, the community will be enhanced.

Individuals, families, students, businesses and organizations have an opportunity to contribute time, talents and resources to city parks and facilities and library resources.

Some of the parks and recreation volunteer opportunities include: coaching a youth sport, serving as a safety range officer, helping with special events and adopting a park or trail. An area especially needing volunteer assistance is greenhouse-related items. Volunteer responsibilities include transplanting seed-

lings, properly labeling transplants, inventorying transplants, assisting with decorative container or hanging baskets or even adopting a flower bed.

The library could use teen or adult volunteers to assist with such things as helping patrons locate requested items, assisting with or presenting programs for all ages, delivering outreach and home-bound materials, shelving materials and helping with special events. ■

Source – City of Grand Island

Omaha partners with tech startup to track public opinion

What's a Warple?

Warple Inc. is an Omaha-based technology startup providing live, real-time, always current views of

what people think. Warple also is a product, which gives everyone a voice and provides a way to see how his or her opinion compares to the collective public opinion.

Omaha Mayor Jean Stothert will partner with Warple to provide another opportunity for community engagement to measure opinion on issues of current public interest.

The first five-part Warple is now on the Mayor's website, <https://mayors-office.cityofomaha.org>, Facebook.com/jean.stothert and Twitter @jean_stothert. It measures support for current and future solid waste collection.

- I support Oma-Gro composting
- I would recycle more with a covered container
- I know about and/or use the recycle drop-off locations
- I am satisfied with the services provided by Omaha's solid waste contractor
- I would like yard waste col-

lected separately from trash/solid waste.

"This is a topic that affects everyone," Mayor Stothert said. "We have been gathering public opinion for more than a year through telephone surveys, a pilot program, open houses and the Mayor's Hotline. Warple is one more way citizens can provide feedback on this important topic."

The city is currently developing a Request for Bids (RFB) for the next solid waste contract. The current contract with Waste Management expires in 2020.

"Warple measures public opinion today and monitors changes over time. We can reach large audiences quickly and provide valuable information to Mayor Stothert and her team," said Warple Founder and CEO Jeff Cahill. "We all want our opinions to matter. Warple makes it easy to get involved in decisions that affect our city." ■

Source – City of Omaha

La Vista Library accepts food donations in exchange for fines

The La Vista Public Library accepted nonperishable food donations for the Tri-City Food Pantry and waived fees on overdue materials Oct. 29-Nov. 4.

Patrons could bring in food donations and school supply items to eliminate their fines.

For more information, contact the Library, 402-537-3900. ■

Source – City of La Vista

Thibodeau appointed to Legislature to fill District 6

*Will finish term
of Sen. Joni Craighead,
who resigned in September*

Theresa Thibodeau of Omaha was sworn in Oct. 19 to represent District 6 in the Nebraska Legislature. Sen. Thibodeau will finish the term of Sen. Joni Craighead, who resigned in September.

Gov. Pete Ricketts announced the appointment at a press conference. He said Thibodeau, who owns a preschool in La Vista, has a long history of community involvement and leadership.

"That kind of experience in the real world – of having to run a business – is exactly the kind of experience that we want in the Legislature," Ricketts said.

Thibodeau earned a bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of Nebraska at Omaha. She and her husband Joseph, a cardiologist, have three children: Anna, Joey and Eleanor. Thibodeau said her time in the Legislature will focus on building a brighter future for all Nebraskans.

"I know there are some tough decisions ahead," she said. "However, in these challenges are opportunities to build on all of the great things and progress that we have already made."

Thibodeau was sworn in by Nebraska Supreme Court Chief Justice Mike Heavican. Her term begins immediately and will end in January 2019. She is eligible to run for election to the seat in the November 2018 general election.



Sen. Theresa Thibodeau

The 2018 legislative session, which is a short or 60-day session, begins Jan. 3. ■

Source – Unicameral Information Office

New hike-bike trail planned in Lexington

Construction of a new segment of the hike-bike trail in Lexington is planned to begin in spring 2018. The proposed 10-foot-wide trail will start on the west side of 20th and Adams Streets and follow a former drainage ditch to the northwest, along the north side of a residential area. West of Independence Ave., the new trail will go south to intersect with 20th Street. ■

Source – City of Lexington

**See page 23 for
Professional Directory**

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Coalition on opioid abuse reports steps taken to address problem

Nebraska's Coalition to Prevent Opioid Abuse of which the League of Nebraska Municipalities is a member, met in October to release the group's strategic initiative report and highlight progress.

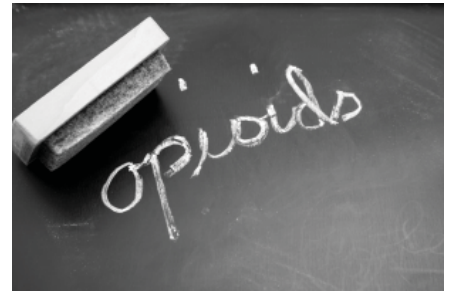
A year ago, nearly 300 leaders in the fields of medicine, public health, social services, governmental policy and law enforcement gathered at the University of Nebraska Medical Center for the "Charting the Road to Recovery: Nebraska's Response to Opioid Abuse" summit. The goal of the summit was to proactively address abuse of prescription and illicit opioids in Nebraska from a collaborative multidisciplinary approach.

The reported progress demonstrates steps taken throughout the year to address opioid addiction and abuse in Nebraska. Among topics included in the report are the following: Nebraska's Prescription Drug Moni-

toring Program/PDMP Training; Prescription Drug Take Back; Pain Management Guidance Document; Dose of Reality Public Awareness Campaign; Naloxone Access; Medication Assisted Treatment; Training for Health Profession Students and Providers; and, Comprehensive Guide for Safe Handling of Drugs for Law Enforcement.

Gov. Pete Ricketts expressed appreciation for the coalition members' efforts, saying: "Nebraska has been a leader in proactively addressing opioid abuse. The work of this coalition is saving lives and building defenses against the public health crisis that has engulfed communities in other states across the nation. Thank you to Attorney General Doug Peterson and our coalition partners for your continued commitment to combat prescription drug abuse."

Jeffrey Gold, M.D., chancellor of the University of Nebraska Medical



© Thinkstock.com

Center and chair of the Nebraska Medicine Board, said education in diagnosis and treatment of opioid use disorders is being addressed in a number of ways at UNMC and Nebraska Medicine, including through the creation of an educational infrastructure to support the training of health professionals and students.

"The UNMC Department of Psychiatry and Nebraska Medicine have launched an outpatient substance use disorder clinic and will develop an Intensive Outpatient Program for patients with combined psychiatric and addiction disorders," he said.

Dr. Gold points out at the beginning of 2017, Nebraska had fewer than 30 healthcare providers who had completed training to be able to prescribe buprenorphine, one of three medications approved by the Food and Drug Administration for the treatment of Opioid Use Disorder. This fall, 213 providers were trained.

Law enforcement also has progressed by building collaborative teams, improving naloxone access and the Nebraska State Patrol Crime Lab creating a comprehensive guide for safe handling of illicit drugs for law enforcement agencies throughout Nebraska. ■

Source – University of Nebraska Medical Center and the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services.

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Positions

Police Officer. City of St. Paul is accepting applications for full-time position of Police Officer until 12/22/2017. NLETC certification is preferred, but not mandatory. Requirements: You must be 21 years of age, have a high school diploma or GED, must have a valid driver's license, and be of good moral character, with no felony or serious misdemeanor convictions. Benefits include health insurance, paid vacation, holidays, sick leave and retirement program. Job description and application forms may be obtained at City Hall, 704 6th Street, St. Paul NE, 308-754-4483 or at the St. Paul Police Department, 514 Grand Street, St. Paul, NE, 308-754-9112. EOE.

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Electrical Lineman Apprentice/Journeyman. City of Neligh is accepting applications for the Electrical Department. The job is a full time position and includes but is not limited to working with high voltage electricity, operating bucket trucks and digger derricks, trencher, dump truck, loader and backhoe. Must have a Class B CDL or be willing to obtain within 3 months. City will require on call rotation and the physical ability to work for extended periods in all types of weather conditions. Applicants must be willing to learn the operation of the electrical generation units and apparatus. Knowledge of electric generation would be beneficial. City also requires the applicant to be willing to work in other departments if necessary. Wages are dependent upon qualifications and prior experience. City has an excellent benefit package with health and life insurance, retirement, vacation, sick and personal leave and paid holidays. Successful applicant must pass a pre-employment drug test. Position open until filled. Applications may be picked up at the City office at 202 Main Street or sent electronically by emailing dana@neligh.org. With questions call the City office at 402-887-4066. City of Neligh is an EOE.

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Further questions may be directed to the General Manager, Wahoo Utilities, 605 N Broadway, Wahoo, NE 68066; Phone 402-443-3222, or by email gibney@wahoo.ne.us.

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