



# Nebraska's Economic Development Districts: Regional Approaches, Local Impact







# Nebraska's Economic Development Districts

## National Network

The eight EDDs in Nebraska are part of a national network of 520 regional development organizations, known locally as economic development districts, councils of governments, local development districts, planning and development districts, regional councils, and regional planning commissions. They are focused on strengthening local governments, communities, and economies through regional solutions, partnerships, and strategies.

**Helping small cities and towns redevelop their main streets and create downtown revitalization plans. Providing capital to locally-owned small businesses to expand operations. Conducting environmental assessments in partnership with local communities. Meeting the public transit needs of the elderly. Assessing housing needs for current and prospective residents. Securing funds for local arts and culture programs. Mapping infrastructure assets for local governments.**

These are just a few of the many services that Nebraska's eight economic development districts (EDDs) provide to improve economic development and quality of life for the 1.9 million residents of the state's 93 counties and over 500 local governments, including towns, cities, and tribal nations. Through this network, Nebraska's EDDs assist cities, counties, businesses, and residents by:

- Supporting community development and planning efforts, such as through local comprehensive planning, grant-writing assistance, and housing programs
- Guiding economic development through loan assistance, technical expertise, and workforce programs
- Planning for regional or cross-jurisdictional projects, such as a regional solid waste management plan, long-range transportation plan, and hazard mitigation plan
- Providing a forum for inter-related communities to comprehensively approach issues of growth and development

Because of each EDD's expertise and regional focus, they play a leading role in both convening stakeholders and creating and implementing long-term plans that benefit the entire region and state. As a result of their work, Nebraska's EDDs have collectively leveraged more than \$50 million in transportation, water, and construction-related investments in the past five years; provided loans to over 600 businesses, which added or retained almost 1,500 jobs across the state; and helped almost 600 families with housing. Overall, these EDD-led efforts have made a large impact on Nebraska's economic vitality.

## Nebraska's EDDs at a Glance



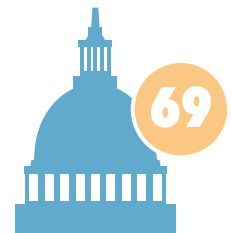
Cover 93 counties.  
(Two EDDs cross state boundaries and include counties in Iowa and South Dakota in their regions).



Serve 527 cities, towns, and tribal governments across the state.



Employ almost 70 employees (full- and part-time).



Are governed, in total, by 69 local elected officials, representing 50 percent of their total board composition.



## Measuring Statewide Impact

- Collectively, Nebraska's eight EDDs successfully managed more than 130 grants in 2015 and 2016, totaling more than \$30 million in investment.
- Five EDDs that manage various federally-funded small business lending programs made over 200 loans, totaling over \$16 million and leveraging more than \$57 million in private sector investment between 2011 and 2016.
- More than 650 new jobs have been created and another 800 jobs have been retained through EDD lending programs since 2011.
- Since 2011, EDD lending programs helped create 300 new businesses with startup funds; an additional 311 businesses across the state were able to maintain operations with their assistance.
- Efforts of two EDDs have led to almost \$86 million in Federal Highway Administration investment for 54 projects in their regions between 2001 and 2016.
- Just over \$35 million in USDA Rural Development, CDBG, and SRF funds were secured by the EDDs between 2011 and 2016 for building construction and various infrastructure projects (water, sewer, roads, and bridges); these funds leveraged another \$36 million in private sector funding.
- EDDs were able to help 246 first-time homeowners buy homes and assist another 337 families with home renovations between 2011 through 2016.



## Strength in Numbers: The Nebraska Regional Officials Council

The Nebraska Regional Officials Council (NROC) was established in 2009. The state's eight EDDs structured this professional network as a mechanism for peer exchange and learning, and to assure a unified voice at the state and regional level when advocating for their regions' programs and services. Each of the EDDs is a dues-paying member; the board is comprised of executive directors from the EDDs.

## Providing Assistance to Local Governments and Partners

Each EDD is focused on providing locally-led, results-driven services for their region, while working closely with the other EDDs across Nebraska to create jobs and investment that allow the state to thrive. The priorities of each region are led by a policy board of local elected officials, public agencies, and private citizens who represent various economic interests from across the region and help guide the EDDs as they develop long-term regional economic development strategies. Support from the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) allows each EDD to develop a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy or CEDS, which identifies locally-grown strategies that guide regional economic development, encourage partnerships and collaboration, and improve economic outcomes and overall quality of life.

Because of this buy-in, each EDD is uniquely positioned to work with public, private, and non-profit partners to leverage resources and opportunities, provide regional collaboration, and support the building blocks for long-term growth across the region.

NEBRASKA

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# Regional Approaches for Local Solutions: Nebraska

## Enhancing and Improving Lake Water Quality: Metropolitan Area Planning Agency

The Metropolitan Area Planning Agency (MAPA) played a key role in the Carter Lake Water Improvement project that spanned Nebraska and Iowa. MAPA accessed funding from agencies in both states and removed regulatory and legislative hurdles governing the use of those funds for the project. Restoration of the lake included stabilizing thousands of feet of shoreline, installing sediment fore bays, dredging parts of the lake, and enlarging a stormwater pond. These actions resulted in a healthy, stabilized water environment with increased clarity that will bring opportunity to the region that could not have been possible without the assistance of MAPA.



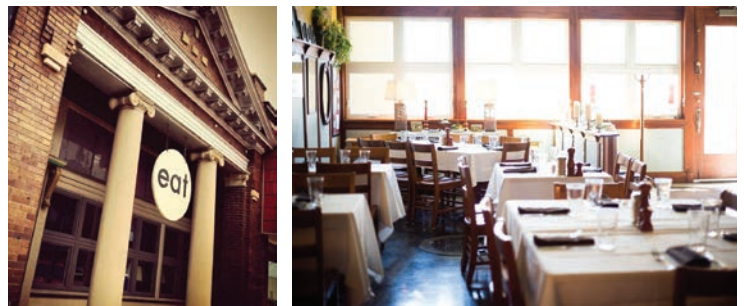
## Community-based Nuisance Abatement: West Central Nebraska Development District

West Central Nebraska Development District (WCNDD) originally launched the Nuisance Abatement program for their region, and its success has led to the creation of a statewide program administered by all EDDs. In most nuisance abatement cases, communities have historically used a complaint-driven process that seeks corrective action through fines and lawsuits. WCNDD's approach calls for a more positive approach that is designed to motivate the whole community to participate in cleanup instead of isolating individuals. With their extensive background on nuisance abatement, WCNDD provides training to others through annual conferences and an informational DVD. Over the years WCNDD has proven that this program can be a vital community development tool that lays the foundation for economic development activities while creating social sustainability and local pride in the community.



## Helping Small Businesses Startup and Thrive: Northeast Nebraska Economic Development District

In 1994, Northeast Nebraska Economic Development District (NENEDD) launched a \$1.4 million business revolving loan fund with a direct investment of \$1.1 million provided by EDA. Since that time, NENEDD has recapitalized this program with other state and federal programs such as USDA-Rural Development and HUD Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Economic Development programs. This loan fund has grown into a \$10 million portfolio loaning out over \$20.4 million to over 320 businesses which was leveraged by approximately \$120.3 million, creating and/or retaining more than 1,600 jobs. Combining technical assistance and funds for working capital and equipment, NENEDD was instrumental in the launch of Eat Restaurant. Located in a retro-fitted bank in Dodge, Eat created three full time and six part time jobs and serves fresh, seasonal products.



## Streamlining the Needs Assessment Process: South Central Economic Development District

The South Central Economic Development District (SCEDD) designed a needs assessment tool to assist communities in creating and implementing community plans. This tool allows communities to access up-to-date information on their demographics, community services, infrastructure and facilities, economic development, housing, education, and social service needs. SCEDD has completed 10 needs assessments in the past five years, resulting in more than \$5 million in community projects that were approved by local governments. These assessments have been vital to the rural communities that SCEDD serves by assessing their current needs and opportunities and providing concrete data to encourage community engagement and action.



# Nebraska's Economic Development Districts in Action

## Linking Housing Opportunities with Economic Development: Central Nebraska Economic Development District

Central Nebraska Economic Development District (CNEDD) partners with the Central Nebraska Housing Developers (CNHD) to deliver quality community and economic development programs in a more holistic manner for the Central Nebraska region. This partnership has been vital to continuing the trend of young families moving back to rural Nebraska communities. In the past five years, CNEDD has assisted 57 home buyers and funded another 207 home renovations through its varied housing programs. It provides resources for down payment assistance, oversees an Occupied Rehabilitation Program for existing home owners, and runs a program for Community Assisted Housing and Workforce Housing to help businesses retain talent. Because of the unique partnership with CNHD, CNEDD is a leading force in driving economic development and housing partnerships across Nebraska.



## Collaborating to Alert Residents of Immediate Danger: Southeast Nebraska Development District

Southeast Nebraska Development District (SENDD) identified a significant need for an Outdoor Warning Systems (OWS) for natural disasters. SENDD staff worked in conjunction with area emergency management directors and local officials in southeast Nebraska on an OWS project to address this need. The participating communities and counties reached agreement on the terms and conditions for participation in a regional joint purchasing project to acquire new OWS units through a program prospectively involving political subdivisions in all 15-member SENDD counties. As a result of this work, SENDD was able to generate \$1.3 million in funding that led to 80 OWS in 45 political subdivisions across their region. Participating political subdivisions realized a cost savings of approximately 75% per unit through their involvement in the project, and now have the ability to alert their residents when danger is approaching, giving everyone much more lead time to take the proper safety precautions.

## Supporting Local Businesses and Growing a Tourism Economy: Panhandle Area Development District

The Panhandle Area Development District (PADD) loan fund has made more than \$730,000 in loans over the past five years, leveraging an additional \$3.1 million in private sector investment while creating 53 jobs and retaining an additional 14 jobs. PADD's loan fund provides gap financing loans for small business and economic development projects across the region. A loan to Mark Ferrari Specialty Coffees helped them relocate their coffee production from Arizona to Nebraska. PADD's financing was used to refurbish a 5,000 square-foot auto repair shop into their current coffee roasting/production. Ferrari coffee is "Hawaii-grown, Nebraska roasted" and shipped across the country. The factory has become a local tourist attraction, landing on the Nebraska Tourism Commission's Nebraska Passport Program, a select group of attractions that tourists can visit to collect stamps to earn prizes.



## Growing a Transportation Network through Trails: Siouxland Interstate Metropolitan Planning Council

The Siouxland Interstate Metropolitan Planning Council (SIMPCO) houses the region's Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), which oversees federally-funded transportation projects in the tri-state area of Nebraska, Iowa, and South Dakota. One recent initiative is SIMPCO's support of South Sioux City, NE's 18 miles of off-street trails which provides a continuous connected loop around the city and passes directly through or adjacent to many of the community's biggest assets. The trail system was funded through SIMPCO's assistance in obtaining federal and state grants in combination with private donations and local funding. In addition, South Sioux City participates in the SIMPCO Bicycle/Pedestrian Roundtable, a committee of advocates, educators, and state and local officials whose goal is to improve bicycle/pedestrian infrastructure, safety, and connectivity in the Tri-State area.







### **Central Nebraska Economic Development District**

P. O. Box 201, Chambers, NE 68725

402.340.0106

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

Counties: Blaine, Boyd, Brown, Cherry, Custer, Garfield, Greeley, Holt, Keya Paha, Loup, Rock, Sherman, Valley, and Wheeler

### **Northeast Nebraska Economic Development District**

111 S. 1st Street, Norfolk, NE 68701

402.379.1150

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

Counties: Antelope, Boone, Burt, Cedar, Colfax, Cuming, Dodge, Dixon, Knox, Madison, Nance, Pierce, Platte, Stanton, Thurston, and Wayne

### **Omaha-Council Bluffs Metropolitan Area Planning Agency**

2222 Cuming Street, Omaha, NE 68102

402.444.6866

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

Counties: Cass, Douglas, Sarpy, and Washington in Nebraska; Pottawattamie and Mills in Iowa

### **Panhandle Area Development District**

1620 Broadway, Suite A-10, Scottsbluff, NE 69361

308.436.6584

[www.nepaddd.com](http://www.nepaddd.com)

Counties: Banner, Box Butte, Cheyenne, Dawes, Deuel, Garden, Kimball, Morrill, Scotts Bluff, Sheridan, and Sioux

### **Siouxland Interstate Metropolitan Planning Council**

1122 Pierce Street, Sioux City, IA 51105

712.279.6286

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

Counties: Dakota in Nebraska; Union in South Dakota; Cherokee, Ida, Monona, Plymouth, and Woodbury in Iowa

### **South Central Economic Development District, Inc.**

401 East Avenue, 2nd Floor, P.O. Box 79, Holdrege, NE 68949

308.455.4770

[www.scedd.us](http://www.scedd.us)

Counties: Adams, Buffalo, Clay, Hall, Franklin, Hamilton, Harlan, Howard, Kearney, Merrick, Nuckolls, Phelps, and Webster

### **Southeast Nebraska Development District**

2100 Fletcher Avenue, Suite 100, Lincoln, NE 68521

402.475.2560

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

Counties: Butler, Fillmore, Gage, Jefferson, Johnson, Nemaha, Otoe, Pawnee, Polk, Richardson, Saline, Saunders, Seward, Thayer, and York

### **West Central Nebraska Development District**

333 East 2nd Street, P.O. Box 599, Ogallala, NE 69153

308.284.6077

[www.west-central-nebraska.com](http://www.west-central-nebraska.com)

Counties: Arthur, Chase, Dawson, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Gosper, Grant, Hayes, Hitchcock, Hooker, Keith, McPherson, Lincoln, Logan, Perkins, Red Willow, and Thomas