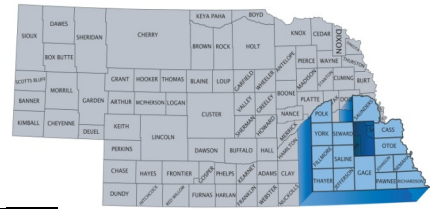


SEND D

Southeast Nebraska Development District



APRIL IS FAIR HOUSING MONTH

The Southeast Nebraska Development District (SEND D) is commemorating the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 and the fight to provide equal access to housing for all through the celebration of National Fair Housing Month in April.

The theme of this year's Fair Housing Month celebration is "Fair Housing is your right: Use it!" The recognition of Fair Housing Month reinforces an awareness of the barriers that inhibit the ability of entire segments of our society to freely access the housing of their choice.

Congress passed the Fair Housing Act in April 1968, immediately following Dr. King's assassination. Amended in 1988, the Act guarantees equal housing opportunities for all people and makes it illegal under federal law to discriminate in the sale, rental, and advertising of housing based on race, color, national origin, gender, religion, family status or disability. Additionally, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) passed the "Equal Access Rule" February 3, 2012 stating that all persons have equal access to housing in HUD programs regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.

To raise public awareness about the injustice of housing discrimination, and to inform people of their rights under fair housing law, SEND D encourages our member communities to engage in activities to affirmatively further fair housing. Some recommended activities (not all inclusive) as suggested by the Nebraska Department of Economic Development may include:

- ◆ Add the Equal Opportunity Fair Housing Logo to official letterhead
- ◆ Prominently display posters, logos, and informational material on fair housing
- ◆ Pass a Fair Housing Resolution
- ◆ Undertake a review of existing ordinances, zoning, and land use practices for discriminatory policies and practices
- ◆ Develop a community Fair Housing web-page



- ◆ Print a notice or advertisement that appears in a prominent location of the local newspaper
- ◆ Support and participate in an educational program coordinated with local realtors, home builders, and mortgage

lenders designed to provide information on fair housing rights

- ◆ Provide a housing referral and counseling services session with fair housing advocates to assist minorities, women, and persons with disabilities seeking housing
- ◆ Host an informational fair housing session for local employers
- ◆ Speak to an elementary school class about the Fair Housing rights of the children and their families
- ◆ Host a Fair Housing Month (April) event such as a Fair Housing poster contest, Fair Housing month proclamation, or housing information event with fair housing advocates.

For more information on actions your community may take to affirmatively further fair housing, contact your SEND D representative.

APRIL 2014 NEWSLETTER



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SENDD COMMUNITIES UTILIZE THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE ACT (CDAA)

The Community Development Assistance Act (CDAA) empowers the Nebraska Department of Economic Development (NDED) to distribute a 40 percent state tax credit to businesses, corporations, insurance firms, financial institutions, or individuals that make eligible contributions of cash, services or materials to approved community betterment projects. A non-profit community betterment organization may apply to the Department to become qualified for CDAA tax credits. Upon approval of a project, the community betterment organization can notify donors they are eligible for tax credits. The donors then submit a tax credit request form to the Department.

SENDD staff recently assisted two communities with developing and submitting CDAA applications that have been funded.

Friend Historical Society: CDAA Award of \$25,000 in Tax Credits.

Twenty-five years ago, community volunteers worked to have the Warren Opera House placed on the National Historic Register, which was accomplished in 1988. Seven years ago the effort was revived for a full restoration of the building. In 2007 the Friend Historical Society (FHS) was incorporated and has been designated as a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization by the IRS. The primary goal of the FHS is to restore the Historic Warren Opera House in Friend. The FHS and partners have invested over \$250,000 (mostly in personal donations) to the renovation of the building. Improvements, both structural and cosmetic, are approximately 90% complete at the street level. This project with CDAA tax credits will allow for retaining the services of a licensed architect, experienced and skilled in historical restoration projects. The services will include preliminary design concepts with updated opinions of cost, and then a final design project bringing plans and specifications ready for further construction activities along with a fully developed final opinion of costs.



Deshler Library: CDAA Award of \$25,000 in Tax Credits

A quality library is paramount to sustaining families, developing community connections, economic growth and a high quality of life for residents and visitors in a community the size of Deshler, Nebraska (pop 747). The Deshler Library Foundation is currently implementing a capital campaign to raise funds for construction of a new, ADA accessible library that will expand services, frequency of use, add space, and include improved technologies. The new library will be a state of the art facility offering expanded and easily accessible educational opportunities. This new library will provide a welcoming environment that is aesthetically pleasing and will promote community collaboration and growth and encourage life-long learning. CDAA will assist the Library Foundation to provide incentives to donors by providing them with a 40% state tax credit to leverage additional funds for the construction of the new library.

RECYCLING GRANTS AVAILABLE

The Nebraska State Recycling Association (NSRA) has grant funds available for municipalities, other government entities, non-profits and recycling companies (for example, waste haulers) who wish to purchase recycling equipment. Interested parties should go to www.recyclenebraska.org and call Deb Rost at 402-933-3059 in Omaha for more information. Grants can help fund the purchase of recycling trailers, semi trailers, carts, dumpsters, balers, forklifts, trucks and more. Equipment may be new, used or in need of refurbishing. Grants will be awarded until the funds are depleted. This is a quick-turnaround program where application-to-approval is usually accomplished in approximately a month.

This grant is one of 132 projects that will receive \$21,750,000 in grant awards from the Nebraska Environmental Trust. The Trust has awarded more than \$213 million to over 1,600 natural resource projects in Nebraska since 1993, and the grants are funded by proceeds from the Nebraska Lottery.