

# Panhandle Area Development District

## March 2018 What You Need to Know (WYNK)

### News

**Leadership Certified Community Program-** Two Panhandle communities have received 'Leadership Certified Community' designation. This program provides a solid framework for communities to identify capacity, stimulate focused planning, and utilize technology to meet the challenges of the future. Designation is good for 5 years and designated communities will have the opportunity to be awarded an extra 75 bonus points for the Downtown Revitalization CDBG Program through NDED. Contact Daniel Bennett at ([danielb@nepadd.com](mailto:danielb@nepadd.com) or 308-436-6584) or your local economic development professional for more info.

**Certified Local Government Program-** This is a federal program administered in Nebraska by the Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office, a division of the Nebraska State Historical Society. The goal of the program is to increase local preservation activities and link local governments with a national network of federal, state and local organizations. Communities can use historic preservation principles to help maintain their identities and enrich their citizens quality of life. Contact Kelli Bacon, CLG Coordinator at [kelli.bacon@nebraska.gov](mailto:kelli.bacon@nebraska.gov). or at 402-471-4766.

### Important Dates

**March 9, 2018- Opportunity Zone Census Tract Designation Proposals due to DED;** The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 authorized the governor of each state to nominate low-income census tracts as 'Opportunity Zones'. Parties who invest projects in these zones via specially set-up 'opportunity funds' are eligible for tax deferrals and breaks on capital gains. Census tracts in **Sioux County, Sheridan County, Box Butte County, and Scotts Bluff County** are primary tracts eligible for designation as 'Opportunity Zones'. Tracts in Dawes, Garden, Cheyenne, and Deuel Counties may also be eligible. Submissions on designation proposals must be on official local government letterhead, and signed by the Chief Elected Official and then scanned and emailed to [ded.opportunityzones@nebraska.gov](mailto:ded.opportunityzones@nebraska.gov) no later than Friday, March 9, 2018. Contact Daniel Bennett at [danielb@nepadd.com](mailto:danielb@nepadd.com) for more information.

**March 14, 2018- Rural Workforce Housing Fund Donation Commitment Forms Due-** PADD staff is preparing a regional application for the Rural Workforce Housing Fund (RWHF). The RWHF creates an opportunity for locally raised money to be matched by state dollars to create regional funds for the development of workforce housing. Communities, private entities, and individuals wishing to donate to the fund on behalf of their community must return donation commitment letters to PADD staff by Wednesday, March 14, 2018 for PADD staff to compile and submit an application to both NIFA matching funding and the DED. Contact Bryan Venable at [bryanv@nepadd.com](mailto:bryanv@nepadd.com) for more information.

**March 15, 2018- Heartland Expressway Monthly Meeting- Kimball, NE Council Chamber;** Heartland Expressway Association will be hosting its regular monthly meeting in Kimball, NE on Thursday, March 15 at 10 am at the Kimball Council Chamber. All are welcome to attend. Contact Daniel Bennett at [danielb@nepadd.com](mailto:danielb@nepadd.com) for more information.

**April 4-5, 2018- Connecting Entrepreneurial Communities Conference- Hastings, NE :** Nebraska Extension's Connecting Entrepreneurial Communities Conference is a premier conference for those interested in building vital, thriving communities throughout Nebraska. This year's tracks include creating vibrant downtowns, effective business attraction and retention, authentic community engagement, helping entrepreneurs through challenges, developing an entrepreneurial culture, and retail academy. [Register online](http://communityvitality.unl.edu/connecting-entrepreneurial-communities) at [communityvitality.unl.edu/connecting-entrepreneurial-communities](http://communityvitality.unl.edu/connecting-entrepreneurial-communities). Conference registration is \$80 before March 23<sup>rd</sup>, and \$100 after. Communities with 3 or more people attending get a \$20 discount per person.

**April 12, 2018- PADD Board of Directors Meeting-** At the Cirrus Conference Center in Scottsbluff. Lunch is provided for all attendees, so please RSVP to Joyce at [panhandle.rcd@allophone.com](mailto:panhandle.rcd@allophone.com) if you plan to attend. A teleconference option will be available at this meeting. Those desiring to host a remote location must provide notice to PADD staff by March 22, 2018. Call Daniel for more details.

## Grant/Funding Opportunities

### Nebraska Rural Workforce Housing Fund

The rural workforce housing fund (RWHF) provides matching grants to non-profit development organizations to reduce the cost of workforce housing in Nebraska's rural communities. Workforce housing is housing that meets the needs of working families and is attractive to new residents locating in a rural community. PADD's sister non-profit, Panhandle Regional Development, Inc., will be submitting an application on behalf of the region.

As of 3/2/18 the communities of Scottsbluff, Gering, Kimball, Bayard, and Gordon have expressed interest in participating in a regional application. Donation commitment forms must be sent to PADD by March 14, 2018 to provide staff an opportunity to compile the application.

Eligible projects include new owner-occupied housing, new rental housing, major owner-occupied or rental rehabilitation, and upper story housing. One to one match is required. Regions may apply for up to \$1 million.

Interested communities must have:

- Current (last 5 years) Housing Study
- 1 to 1 match cash donations contributed by individuals, businesses, foundations, local and regional political subdivisions, or other non-profits.
- Projects which could be reasonably be occupied within 24 months.

Contact Bryan at PADD for further information at [bryanv@nepadd.com](mailto:bryanv@nepadd.com).

### **FEMA Fire Prevention and Safety Grant**

FEMA Fire Prevention and Safety (FP & S) grant application period opens Monday Feb. 12, 2018, and will close Friday March 16, 2018. For more information [www.fema.gov/firegrants](http://www.fema.gov/firegrants)

### **People For Bikes Community Grants**

The program provides funding for projects which build momentum for bicycling in communities across the US. These projects can include bike paths, rail trails, mountain bike trails, bike parks, BMX facilities, bike racks, bike parking, and bike repair stations, and large-scale bicycle advocacy initiatives. Maximum grant awards are \$10,000 requiring a 50% match. Letters of interest are due July 23, 2018 with full applications due October 19, 2018.

### **Highway Safety Office Project Grants- Neb. Department of Transportation**

Project grants are available to organizations for traffic safety projects and activities. The funding supports projects and activities that contribute to the reduction of traffic crashes and result in fewer deaths and injuries. Funding is provided to assist with the implementation of projects which will address specifically identified traffic related safety problems including: alcohol, speed, occupant protection and youth. Only governmental agencies and 501c3 non-profit organizations are eligible for assistance. In the Panhandle, only projects within Scotts Bluff County are eligible. Find the [grant guidelines](#) on the DOT website. **Proposals for FY 19 must be received by March 31, 2018.** Contact [danielb@nepadd.com](mailto:danielb@nepadd.com) for more information.

### **Greater Good Grants**

The Panhandle Partnership is accepting applications for community-based projects in areas of community capacity enhancement, construction, renovation, or purchase/improvement of a property or equipment. Only communities in the Nebraska Panhandle are eligible to apply. Projects should demonstrate open, inclusive collaboration and benefit all citizens of the community. Projects must also demonstrate sustainability after grant fund infusion and funds may not be used for operations of programs. Maximum awards are generally \$50,000 and require 1 to 1 match. **Applications are due by 5:00 pm MT on May 30, 2018.** Awards are made by July 1, 2018. Contact the Panhandle Partnership at 308-633-3818 or [tyler.irvine@panhandlepartnership.com](mailto:tyler.irvine@panhandlepartnership.com) for more information or begin filling out an application at: <https://panhandlepartnership.com/grants/greater-good-grant-online-application/>

**Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)**

Contact PADD staff if your community is interested in any of the following opportunities. Go to the DED website under [Grants](#) to view full guidelines.

Program	Contact	Max Award	Match	Deadline
Economic Development	<a href="mailto:Tom.stephens@nebraska.gov">Tom.stephens@nebraska.gov</a> 402-471-6587	\$1 Million	100%	Open now, Rolling basis
Tourism Development	<a href="mailto:Steve.charleston@nebraska.gov">Steve.charleston@nebraska.gov</a> 402-471-3757	\$350,000	25%	Open now, Rolling basis
Water/Wastewater	<a href="mailto:Abigail.anderson@nebraska.gov">Abigail.anderson@nebraska.gov</a> 402-471-3775	\$250,000	10%	Open now, Rolling basis

**Rural Energy for America Program-2017**

The Rural Business Cooperative Service (the Agency) announces the acceptance of applications under the Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) which is designed to help agricultural producers and rural small businesses reduce energy costs and consumption and help meet the Nation’s critical energy needs. REAP have two types of funding assistance: (1) Renewable Energy Systems and Energy Efficiency Improvements Assistance, and (2) Energy Audit and Renewable Energy Development Assistance Grants. The Renewable Energy Systems and Energy Efficiency Improvement Assistance provides grants and guaranteed loans to agricultural producers and rural small businesses to purchase and install renewable energy systems and make energy efficiency improvements to their operations. Eligible renewable energy systems for REAP provide energy from: Wind, solar, renewable biomass (including anaerobic digesters), small hydro-electric, ocean, geothermal, or hydrogen derived from these renewable resources. The Energy Audit and Renewable Energy Development Assistance Grant is available to a unit of State, Tribal, or local government; instrumentality of a State, Tribal, or local government; institution of higher education; rural electric cooperative; a public power entity; or a council, as defined in 16 U.S.C. 3451. The recipient of grant funds, grantee, will establish a program to assist agricultural producers and rural small businesses with evaluating the energy efficiency and the potential to incorporate renewable energy technologies into their operations.

Contact [marla.marx@ne.usda.gov](mailto:marla.marx@ne.usda.gov) for more information.

**Transportation Innovation Act Economic Opportunity**

This is a program from the Nebraska Department of Roads to encourage businesses to make a difference in Nebraska. The goal of the program is attract or retain jobs and private capital investment in Nebraska, to make grant funds for strategic transportation improvements, and to connect businesses to Nebraska’s multimodal transportation system. Eligible applicants include cities, counties or MPO’s. To apply, submit a letter of interest to Korey Donahoo at [korey.donahoo@nebraska.gov](mailto:korey.donahoo@nebraska.gov)

**Brownfields Assessment Funds Available through PADD and NDEQ**

PADD and Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality (NDEQ) have funds made available through the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to perform Phase I and II assessments of brownfields properties. Communities or a non-profit organization must be the applicant for the funds to perform these assessments. Private individuals and businesses can partner with current landowners, PADD, and their municipality to agree to have these sites assessed at no cost to them. For more information and additional brownfield opportunities, contact [danielb@nepadd.com](mailto:danielb@nepadd.com) or go to [www.nepadd.com/Brownfields.html](http://www.nepadd.com/Brownfields.html).