

PADD 2020 Snapshot

A year in review and a look into the next.



I find myself reflecting on this past year. It has certainly held a lot of change for PADD. We have had a change of Executive Director as our past director, Jeff Kelley, has transitioned to a part time role as he prepares for eventual retirement, and I was chosen as his successor in August. Our Planner, Megan Koppenhafer, decided to pursue her passion and accepted a role with Panhandle Public Health. We wish Megan nothing but the best in her future endeavors. We were very fortunate to be able to hire another Iowa State graduate to fill our Planner position. Julia Hertaus joined the staff in September and has proven to be a tremendous asset to our team. We look forward to the skills and expertise that she will bring to the region.

This past year, Nebraskans displayed their resiliency. A world Pandemic of a scale that most of us never experienced has affected our country to a degree that I don't believe anyone could have anticipated. In fact, as I write this there are still counties within our region that are dealing with their highest case counts. This coupled with the impact that pandemic has had on people's lives including children being forced to home school, loss of jobs, and closure of businesses, as well as severely depressed commodity prices that has had a tremendous impact on our Agriculture sector, leaves virtually no part of our lives or the economy left untouched.

In spite of these challenges, the panhandle of Nebraska has moved forward. This year, PADD secured over \$3.4 million in Community Development Block Grants to assist our communities. We were also award nearly a quarter of a million dollars from the EDA to be used over the next two years to help our region recover from the pandemic. We have been able to assist communities to repurpose idle revolving loan fund accounts that will now be used to complete meaningful projects within their communities. We were also able to administer a landlord assistance program which assisted 41 landlords that serve low to moderate income residents in the Panhandle that have been affected by Covid-19. This was all achieved during a pandemic which has affected the way we operate and our ability to meet face to face or get out into the communities on a regular basis. I could not be more proud of the staff and their ability to continue to provide this assistance to our membership during these challenging times.

We could not do this work without your support. I want to extend an open invitation for all members to visit PADD's office when you are in Scottsbluff. I would also encourage each of you to call me with your ideas, suggestions, and thoughts.

Thank you,
Bryan Venable
Executive Director
Panhandle Area Development District

As this very unusual year draws to a close, I would like to take a moment to share a few thoughts. None of us imagined that this year would be so unprecedented and disrupted.

I want to thank everyone for their kindness, grace, and cooperation as the PADD staff members work to provide continued quality services to their members. I have been amazed by the flexibility, tenacity, and creativity that the staff and board have shown as we have navigated this new and different way of conducting business.

For now, I wanted simply to reach out to say that I miss our monthly meetings in person. I wish you a safe and healthy holiday season and look forward to seeing everyone again in 2021.

Sincerely,
Janine Schmidt
PADD Board Chair

To say this has been an unusual year would be an understatement. After 22 years at PADD I announced my retirement that was to be June 30, 2020, but the pandemic changed all that.

The search for a new Executive Director was put on hold, and the search committee faced some challenges in the process but ultimately made a great decision to have Bryan take over as Executive Director September 1, 2020. I went part time starting October 1st and would decide prior to the conclusion of the year if I would stay into 2021.

The State of Nebraska awarded four new grants; two to Morrill, one to Scottsbluff, and one to Big Springs. Along with several other grant projects that have yet to get started, I made the decision to postpone my retirement until June 30, 2021.

It has been my pleasure to be a part of this regional organization for the past 22 years. While I look forward to retirement, I will miss the relationships formed during my time at PADD and the great work that has been done.

Jeff Kelley
Former Executive Director
Panhandle Area Development District

I want to first extend a hello to everyone as I have not yet had the opportunity to travel the Panhandle and meet most of you. I am very excited to be here at PADD to begin my professional career as a planner in a state that I had never previously traveled to until now.

The Panhandle has been very welcoming, and I am excited to hopefully start traveling, learning more about the area, and using my education toward the betterment of all our PADD communities in the 2021 year.

Julia Hertaus
Community Planner
Panhandle Area Development District

Landlord Assistance Program

The Landlord Relief was a joint grant that was awarded to the NROC, an association of the eight economic development districts in the State of Nebraska. In the Panhandle, we were able to assist 41 landlords with \$113,607.33 in grants to relieve landlords of lost revenue due to the Covid-19 pandemic and assist with minor repairs to benefit landlords renting to low-to-moderate income (LMI) tenants.

Brownfields Grant

Our Brownfields grant has been extended to September 2021. In total, we have worked with eight properties and have provided services for projects in Crawford and Gering that will lead to site development in the future. We have three new sites in the works and are looking forward to seeing the opportunities we can help achieve by conducting environmental site assessments!



CDBG Application Deadline open cycle, begins July 1:

- Economic Development
- Emergent Threat
- Tourism Development
- Youth Job Training
- Water/Wastewater

**all other application
deadlines TBA

2020 CDBG Recipients

Economic Development - City of Gering

Tourism - City of Sidney

Water/Wastewater - City of Crawford

Public Works Funding - Village of Morrill

Owner-Occupied Housing Rehabilitation -
Village of Morrill & City of Scottsbluff

Planning Grant - Village of Big Springs

In total, over \$3.4 million in CDBG grants
were awarded in the Panhandle in 2020!

2021 Panhandle Planning Workshop

Join us Thursday, January 21, 2021 at the Gering Civic Center for our annual planning workshop!

Register with the following link:
<https://panhandlepartnership.com/event/2021-padd-planning-workshop/>

Mandatory masking, social distancing, and public health guidelines in place to hold a safe, in-person event. This event subject to change to virtual platform contingent on Covid-19.

Contact Julia with any questions.
julia@nepadd.com
308-633-6829



2021 Meeting Schedule

January 14th	April 8th	July 8th	October 14th
February 11th	May 13th	August 12th	November 11th
March 11th	June 10th	September 9th	December 9th

To improve the economy and the standard of living, and enhance the natural and human environments in the Nebraska Panhandle.

- The PADD Mission

