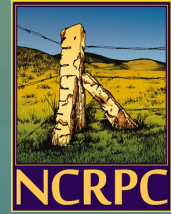


NCRPC NEWS

An update from the North Central Regional Planning Commission



ABOUT US

Our Mission

Advancing rural Kansas through comprehensive planning and development services.

Our Commitment

At the NCRPC, we are committed to giving our member Cities and Counties the best service possible. If you ever feel we are not putting our best foot forward, please reach out to Emily Benedick, Executive Director, at executivedirector@ncrpc.org.

Contact Us

109 N. Mill, PO Box 565
Beloit, KS 67420 | 785-738-2218
www.ncrpc.org

facebook.com/ncrpcbeloit

If you have a story idea or would like to update your address, contact us at: communications@ncrpc.org.

EXECUTIVE BOARD

Chair: Tom Claussen, *Mitchell County*

Vice Chair: Heather Hartman, *Mitchell County Community Development*

Secretary/Treasurer: Vicki Steffens, *Appointed Position*

Ellen Barber, *Marshall County Partnership for Growth*

Greg Bender, *Ellsworth County*

Craig Chamberlin, *Dickinson County*

Ron Copple, *Cloud County*

Kelly Gourley, *Lincoln County Economic Development Foundation*

Luke Mahin, *Republic County Economic Development*

D.D. Malmberg, *Ottawa County*

Raleigh Ordoyne, *Washington County*

Keith Roe, *Jewell County*

Stacie Schmidt, *City of Ellsworth*

Hannah Stambaugh, *Saline County*

David Thurlow, *Clay County*

Vacant, *City of Salina*

SUPPORTING HOUSING NEEDS

TWO NONPROFITS CONTINUE MISSION TO STRENGTHEN NCK HOUSING

Two housing nonprofit organizations were launched in the region in 2018 with the purpose of helping to preserve and strengthen housing in North Central Kansas. That mission continues today.

“We know that housing issues vary throughout the region, but the overall need for housing assistance is a common theme that we hear often,” NCRPC Housing Director Keegan Bailey said.

The first focus of the nonprofits was creating and administering an incentive program to make home buying more affordable through down payment and closing cost assistance. Since 2018, home ownership pilot programs in the region have combined to assist in the purchase of 89 homes with an approximate value of \$10.2 million.

“The pilot home ownership programs have proven to be successful and we are continuing efforts to expand the program in the region,” Bailey said.

“We also continue to look ahead to what other opportunities exist to support housing efforts.”

The leadership team for both nonprofit organizations include NCRPC staff Emily Benedick, Debra Peters, and Keegan Bailey and Executive Board Treasurer Vicki Steffens. Local advisory committees are also in place for each nonprofit.

These committees will expand as additional programming is added.

NCK Housing Opportunities, Inc.

NCK Housing Opportunities, Inc. is a 501(c)3 serving Cloud, Ellsworth, Jewell, Lincoln, Mitchell, Ottawa, Republic and Saline counties. Current members on the local advisory committee include Landee Thyfault, Cloud County; Debra Kootz, Ellsworth County; Gaylene Sorell, Jewell County; Bree McReynolds-Baetz, Lincoln County; Carol Torkelson, Mitchell County; Alicia Kiefer, Ottawa County; and David Blecha, Republic County.



NCK Housing Opportunities, Inc. has completed home ownership programs in Cloud, Ellsworth, Lincoln, Mitchell, Ottawa and Republic counties so far. Funding was recently awarded that will expand the NCK Home Ownership Pilot Program to Jewell and Saline counties with additional information to be announced in the coming weeks.

(See **Housing** on page 3)

NEWS BRIEFS

We Want to Hear from You!

The NCRPC is updating its regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) and needs your help. We invite you to take a short survey if you live or work in North Central Kansas — including the counties of Clay, Cloud, Dickinson, Ellsworth, Jewell, Lincoln, Marshall, Mitchell, Ottawa, Republic, Saline and Washington.



Your feedback is important to help shape the future of North Central Kansas and help our organization better serve your community needs. Survey input will also ensure the CEDS document reflects the current needs and priorities of the region.

As a thank you for completing the survey, respondents have the option to list a non-profit organization located in the NCRPC 12-county service area. Two survey responses will be randomly selected and a \$50 donation will be made to the nonprofit of choice listed by the respondent. Donations will be paid through private funds.

The survey should take less than 5 minutes to complete. It will end June 15. Thank you!

TAKE THE SURVEY:

www.surveymonkey.com/r/2021nckceds
or scan the QR code



PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

CITY OF FRANKFORT COMPLETES PROJECT TO IMPROVE TRUCK ROUTE

What had been one of the roughest streets to travel in the City of Frankfort is now one of the smoothest after the city completed a major project to improve an existing truck route.

Highways 9 and 99 intersect in the heart of Frankfort's downtown district. Having two state highways running through town, the city sees a tremendous amount of truck traffic. An east truck route was previously updated and already approved by the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) as an official truck route. The city's truck route on the west side of downtown was another story.

"The street had tons of pot holes and we couldn't keep it repaired enough for trucks or even local traffic to use," Frankfort City Clerk Melody Tommer said. "We wanted it to be an approved KDOT truck route and it is in the process of getting approval from them now."

The city believes its efforts to improve the route will ultimately help preserve the roads downtown from the wear of heavy truck traffic and decrease congestion in the downtown area.

A 2019 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) award of \$265,656 helped make this street project possible. Funding for the project came in the Community Facilities category of the Annual Competitive Grants offered by the Kansas Department of Commerce. In addition, the city put in an equal amount of funds it secured through a USDA Rural Development loan.

The resulting project upgraded the existing highly trafficked west truck route to concrete pavement. Corresponding storm sewer, sidewalks and curb and gutter improvements



The City of Frankfort completed a project in Fall 2020 that improved one of its existing truck routes. The project was funded through a combination of a CDBG grant and a USDA Rural Development loan. (Photo courtesy of Frankfort Area News)

were also made. The truck route reopened in September 2020. According to the city, the benefits of completing the project have been noticeable.

"It has been a huge improvement," Tommer said. "Some water and sewer lines were also replaced, along with storm sewer improvements. Trucks and heavy equipment are using it more and more and therefore saving our downtown streets from all the wear and tear."

Key partners involved with the project included Inline Construction and project engineers CES Group, Inc., both of Marysville. NCRPC staff provided project planning assistance, grant writing and administration.

For more information about the funding sources used for this project or to discuss a project need, contact the NCRPC community development staff.

There are many great things happening in North Central Kansas. Project Spotlight shares stories from communities around the region and how they solved challenges.

MEET THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

Keith Roe joined the NCRPC Executive Board in 2021 as a representative of Jewell County. Roe has a long record of elective public service with 25 years combined in the Kansas Legislature, Mankato and Rock Hills school boards and presently the Jewell County Board of Commissioners.

For 40 years Keith Roe has been a farmer and rancher in northern Jewell County, Kansas, the sixth generation of the Roe family in that location. He is a graduate of Kansas State



Keith Roe

University in economics and has graduate degrees from the University of Kansas, MBA and Law. Keith and his wife, Bethany, reside in Mankato and enjoy traveling when they have the opportunity. "Faced with today's world, we are every day more and more pleased to live in rural Kansas," Roe said.

EVENTS & DEADLINES

NCRPC Executive Board Meetings
Thursday, May 27, 2021
Thursday, July 29, 2021
Beloit Office and via Zoom, 2 p.m.

Application deadline for the NCRPC McKinney Leadership Scholarship
Tuesday, June 1, 2021
www.ncrpc.org/leadershipscholarship/

Find more...

Events: www.ncrpc.org/news/events
Funding opportunities and deadlines: www.ncrpc.org/resources/funding

Coming Soon!

Trainings for businesses and non-profits in the region. Watch for information at www.ncrpc.org and on our Facebook page at facebook.com/ncrpcbeloit.

Housing

(Continued from page 1)

NCRPC Business Finance Director Debra Peters is the NCK Home Ownership Program Manager. Both nonprofits and their related housing initiatives originally began with funding from the business loan pool that Peters manages. Many partners have been involved with efforts to expand and promote the available programs.

"The success of the pilot programs so far is credited to the funding sources that make it all possible in conjunction with the dedicated staff, committee members, area banks, economic development/chamber representatives, and realtors who help get the word out in the region," Peters said.

Four Rivers Housing Opportunities, Inc.

Four Rivers Housing Opportunities, Inc. is a 501(c)3 serving Clay, Dickinson, Marshall and Washington counties. Members on the local advisory committee include David Walters, Dickinson County, and Lynn Mayer, Marshall County.



Home Ownership Program Updates

Currently Available:

Dickinson County Home Ownership Program

Coming Soon:

NCK Home Ownership Program expanding to Jewell and Saline Counties

More information to be announced in the coming weeks

www.ncrpc.org/services/homeownership

Currently, Four Rivers Housing Opportunities, Inc. is offering a home ownership program in Dickinson County. The program offers down payment and closing cost assistance through loan/grant dollars. It launched in March 2020 and continues until funds are exhausted or when the program ends on December 31, 2021. NCRPC Housing Director Keegan Bailey is the Four Rivers Home Ownership Program Manager.

"The Dickinson County Home Ownership Program can help individuals obtain the home of their dreams while also helping to keep the housing stock occupied and maintained," Bailey said.

The grant portion of the program in Dickinson County was made possible by several local generous donations. To learn more, contact a participating Dickinson County bank or visit www.ncrpc.org/services/homeownership.

Four Rivers Housing Opportunities, Inc. also completed a successful home ownership program in the City of Marysville in 2019. "This program, along with lower interest rates, jump started the Marysville housing market to a point where we actually have a shortage of homes for sale," Lynn Mayer, CEO of Citizens State Bank of Marysville and member of the Four Rivers Housing Opportunities, Inc., Advisory Committee said.



North Central Regional Planning Commission

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RESILIENCY EFFORTS CONTINUE

TWO ADDED TO PROJECT TEAM; PLANNING FOR FREE BUSINESS AND NONPROFIT TRAININGS UNDERWAY

The NCRPC is pleased to announce that Deb Ohlde and Laura Leite have joined the organization's economic recovery and resiliency project team as contracted consultants. They fill the role previously held by the Regional Economic Disaster Recovery Coordinator, supported in part by the EDA CARES Act.

Ohlde lives in Clyde and has many years of experience in strategic planning as well as proposal writing/project management in the community development and non-profit sectors. She worked for NCRPC from 1994-2016. Deb currently works for Kansas Corn as the Director of Grower Services, while also occasionally doing small consulting projects. Her focus will be updating the resiliency portion of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDs).



Deb Ohlde



Laura Leite

Ohlde will be reaching out to various stakeholder groups over the coming months.

Leite lives in Republic and brings extensive experience in program planning and management. She has most recently held positions with Cloud County Community College, Kansas Board of Regents, and Salina Area Technical College. Leite will be coordinating the upcoming business and non-profit trainings.

"We are excited to have Deb's knowledge and expertise collaborating with NCRPC again. She was an invaluable asset to the organization before her departure in 2016," NCRPC Executive Director Emily Benedick said. "In addition, Laura comes highly recommended and we are thrilled to have her on board."

The NCRPC has released a Request for Proposals for delivery of training and technical assistance to businesses and non-profits located in the 12-county service area. The deadline for proposals is May 21. It is anticipated that a schedule of initial trainings will be available by mid-July.

"We look forward to building a cadre of professionals who can deliver personalized training to businesses and nonprofits in North Central Kansas," coordinator Laura Leite said.