



Holt County Economic Development

Annual Report

2017

PO Box 543
O'Neill, NE 68763

T/F: (402) 336-1504

info@growtholt.com

www.GrowHolt.com

Letter from the Executive Director



OUR MISSION

To enhance & promote economic vitality and a strong sense of community for existing and future businesses in Holt County.

HCED BOARD OF DIRECTORS

ATKINSON Jill Brennan Lou Ann Tooker	O'NEILL Bill Price Nikki Schwanz
CHAMBERS Wayne Green	PAGE Cora Calkins
EWING James Ramold Sharon Swails	STUART Amanda Paxton Jon Schmaderer
INMAN Dorine Campbell	HOLT COUNTY Dave Hickey Bill Tielke

Last year proved to be a year of great change for Holt County Economic Development with the hire of a new Director and Project Manager. With such a drastic staff shift, the HCED Board of Directors assembled in an attempt to define more precisely the role of our office and its Strategic Plan.

Being witness to all of the great things this office has done, I am honored to be able to continue those great traditions and try to expand on them.

Holt County has emerged as a leader and an example for other counties to emulate and that is because of great leadership and successful businesses that are able to thrive in our communities.

Six different news articles were written about the people and organizations in Holt County this past year. Not to mention a return visit from 10/11 news for another "Our Town" edition

showcasing the unique features of our area.

When you look at the number of new and expanding businesses, along with the growing population, I think it's safe to say, our secret is out! People are starting to see the advantages and opportunities that come with living in rural Nebraska.

Our job here at HCED will be to attract them, get them involved, and help them succeed. With the continued support from our generous donors, Holt County and each community, that is exactly what we intend to do!

Darby Paxton

When you look at the number of new and expanding businesses, along with the growing population, I think it's safe to say, our secret is out!

LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Ten years ago we started with a simple mission, sustain what we have and take action for our future. We worked to build on the key strengths of each of our communities, our people!

About a year ago we hired Darby Paxton as our executive director for his passion and dedication for helping our businesses. He truly loves what he does which is very inspiring.

We have had many success stories in the past, but we take little time to reflect. We keep working hard to help make our communities great places to live, raise families and own a business.

I would like to thank our board, executive director and our staff for their commitment and dedication to Holt County.

Jim Brennan

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

7/1/2016 - 6/30/2017

RECEIPTS	
Community Contributions	\$65,228
Grant Income	\$61,190
Programming	\$ 853
Tuition	\$2,600
Sponsorship & Donations	\$8,679
TOTAL RECEIPTS	\$138,550
DISBURSEMENTS	
Building Expense	\$4,508
Capital Expenditures	\$0.00
Employee Insurance	\$10,716
Employee Retirement & Benefits	\$1,758
Miscellaneous & Contingent	\$40
Payroll Tax	\$4,217
Professional Fees	\$6,646
Programming	\$8,843
Salary & Wages	\$62,774
Supplies & Publishing	\$4,500
Training, Outreach - All Staff	\$3,336
Utilities	\$4,861
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS	\$112,199
Excess of Receipts Over Disbursements	\$26,351
Fund Balance, July 1, 2016	\$32,842
Fund Balance, June 30, 2017	\$95,980



THE 2017 HOMETOWN LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE CLASS INCLUDES:

ALISSA DOERR, O'NEILL; ALISON OLSON, EMMET; MEGAN HACKER, O'NEILL; KADI DAVIS, CHAMBERS; MICHAEL PEEK, O'NEILL; BRANDON PETERSON, O'NEILL; RJ WOLGEMUTH, ATKINSON; STEVE DEVAL, O'NEILL; KURT KRAMER, STUART; KELSEI GROSS, ATKINSON; DARBY PAXTON, STUART.

HomeTown Leadership Institute (HLI) continues to impress with another great class! Since 2005, HLI has helped educate participants on different areas of Holt County and further develop personal leadership skills and talent. Class topics include Economic Development, Housing, Government, Agriculture, Entrepreneurship, Healthcare, Nonprofits, and Community Foundations in Holt County.

Class XIII has shown us more great leaders and talent eager to learn about Holt County. They are already doing amazing things in their communities and we hope what they have learned this year has inspired them to continue.

HOLT COUNTY BY THE NUMBERS

POPULATION	10,435
MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME	\$46,728
LABOR FORCE	5,881
HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA	92.1%
BACHELORS DEGREE OR HIGHER	20.9%

Source: Nebraska Department of Labor, Census.gov

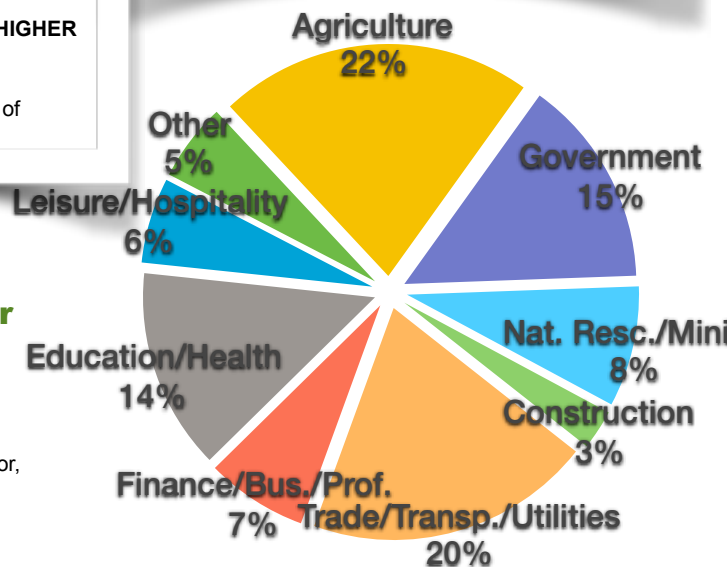
GrowHolt.com had **146,949** total page views between July 1, 2016 and June 30, 2017.

That's over **402** visits a day!

Of those total page views, **42,465** were first time visits.

Industry Workforce for Holt County

Source: U.S. Dept. of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics



NEW BUSINESSES

- Brush Creek Brewing Company, Atkinson
- Farmers State Bank, Atkinson
- Half Full Bar & Grill, Atkinson
- K&M K-Lawn, LLC, Atkinson
- Learning from A to Z Daycare, Atkinson
- Little Hand Daycare, Atkinson
- The Salty Blonde, Atkinson
- Fowler Heating, Air, & Plumbing, O'Neill
- Great Plains State Bank, O'Neill
- Handlebend, O'Neill
- Jason Sears Flooring, O'Neill
- Jenkins Detailing, O'Neill
- Midwest Country Clinic, LLC, O'Neill
- Nekolite Roofing, O'Neill
- R Inspired Design, O'Neill
- Robinson Family Painting, O'Neill
- Rustic Junkies, O'Neill
- Strong Performance, O'Neill
- Sundown Electric, O'Neill
- Cutrix Sound & Entertainment, Page
- Cornerstone Kitchens, Stuart
- Kelly Kohle Massage, Stuart
- Root Electric, Stuart
- Warp Networks, Inc., Stuart

BUSINESS EXPANSIONS AND TRANSITIONS

Holt County Economic Development noted 8 business expansions and assisted with 1 business transition from July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017.

ENTREPRENEUR TARGETING, VISITATION AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Holt County Economic Development had 195 direct interactions with Holt County businesses who requested information, referrals, or technical assistance on a variety of topics. HCED had 143 revisits to or from those initial direct interactions.

The HCED team members conducted 55 on-site business visits with targeted businesses in Holt County.

Eight requests for financial assistance / loan packaging were received from businesses and entrepreneurs that have operations in Holt County during July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017.

NEW RESIDENT RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

Holt County Economic Development continues to track the new residents moving into Holt County. This past year, 85 new families began calling Holt County home.

On HCEDs website, 283 career opportunities were posted online at www.GrowHolt.com.

HEARTLAND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COURSE

On April 24th, Darby attended the Heartland Economic Development Course in Blue Springs, Missouri with a scholarship that he was awarded from Black Hills Energy. This was an intense course of basic economic development taught by some of the top people in their fields. Course subjects consisted of marketing strategies, location strategies (including site selection), project funding, community development, strategic planning, workforce development, ethics, and business retention and expansion visits.

Taught in a classroom style environment there was freedom to ask questions at will. This allowed everyone the ability to tailor the class to their specific needs. Throughout the conference, they were broken down into groups with classmates from five other states and were tasked with Economic Development Challenge Labs, where teams would work together to problem solve simulated issues.

“I really found a lot of value in hearing how everyone serviced their different communities and took away some great ideas on questions to ask my own local businesses. I realized that whether my fellow students had been in economic development for 25 years or for 6 days, we were all there to learn how to do our job better. I believe that with the information I learned at Heartland, I can!”

-Darby Paxton



BHE RENEWABLES PRESENTS \$80,000 TO HOLT COUNTY COMMUNITY FUNDS

In June of 2017, BHE Renewables contributed \$80,000 to the Nebraska Community Foundation. This donation will be distributed to the respective community-based affiliated funds in Stuart, Atkinson, O'Neill and Chambers, as well as the Holt County Economic Development fund.

As part of the Grande Prairie Wind Project, BHE Renewables has committed to donating \$80,000 per year to benefit charitable activities and opportunities in the community surrounding the 400-megawatt energy generation project.

Alicia Knapp, project manager for BHE Renewables, stated, “when this annual donation is combined with eligible matching grants over the next five years, the fund has the potential to grow to more than half a million dollars.”

The BHE Renewable contribution, along with the renewal of the Rudolph R. Elis grant, will benefit residents of all ages through a variety of projects in Holt County.



OTHER NEWS

Holt County Economic Development commissioned a billboard for the west side of O'Neill in June 2017.

HCED gave out 142 mailboxes to Holt County graduating seniors in May 2017 encouraging them to go out and spread their wings, but always remember they have a place and the help, should they need it, in Holt County.

THANK YOU to our supporters and partners!

PLATINUM

Pinnacle Bank, O'Neill
Tri-County Bank of Atkinson, Stuart
and O'Neill

GOLD

Brian & Nicole Sedlacek, O'Neill
John Watson, In Memoriam, O'Neill

MUNICIPAL PARTNERS

City of Atkinson
Holt County
Village of Emmet
Village of Inman
Village of Stuart
City of O'Neill
Village of Chambers
Village of Ewing
Village of Page



BRONZE

Nebraska Public Power District
Jim Brennan, Atkinson
Matt & Tracy Dennis, O'Neill
J & L Collision Center, O'Neill
Diversified Electrical Contractors,
Page

SUPPORTER

Briar Park R.V. Park, Atkinson
Doolittle Insurance, Amelia

ECONOMIC INDICATORS

Annual Taxable Sales	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
Holt County	119,653,081	111,082,118	126,924,841	127,535,633	120,966,484
Atkinson	19,479,588	18,754,813	24,351,591	26,051,257	24,912,653
O'Neill	85,392,506	78,833,695	85,557,964	84,767,494	81,071,107

Source: Nebraska Department of Revenue - Motor Vehicle Sales excluded

Annual Lodging Tax	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
Holt County	121,044.18	107,958	100,398	92,499	96,621

Source: Nebraska Department of Revenue

Unemployment Rate	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
Holt County	2.6	2.4	2.7	2.8	2.9
Nebraska	3.3	3.0	3.3	4.0	3.9

Source: Nebraska Department of Labor

HCED TEAM

Darby Paxton
Executive Director
darby@growtholt.com

Kristi Peterson
Project Manager
kristi@growtholt.com

Linda Green
Executive Assistant
linda@growtholt.com