

ANNUAL REPORT

2019-2020

Our Mission

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



LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Holt County continues to be an area of great opportunity. Four communities now have the ability to incentivize growth by offering locally controlled loans and grants. Three communities will have fiber-to-the-home broadband capabilities by the end of 2020. Housing opportunities continue to grow in all of our communities and the cleanup of dilapidated buildings are being addressed. Early Childhood Education has been moved to the front of our pursuit to attract and retain young families to our county. That attraction comes in the form of jobs, affordable housing, and early childhood education as well as providing a safe environment that only rural Nebraska can provide. When we grow our population we then can incentivize entrepreneurs, cultivate new leaders, and strengthen our labor workforce. This is the entire goal and purpose of Holt County Economic Development and you are an important part of our success. Please come visit us to find out what opportunities are available for you!

Darby Paxton, Executive Director

2020 HOMETOWN LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE



2020 HLI: Front row (L-R): Mikayla Johnson, Devon Baum, Stephany Jackson, Tori Sanderson; back row: (L-R): Dillon Cleary, McKenzie Brozek, Cheye Shaw, Jacey Kozisek, Desiree Hamilton, Brant Pavel; not pictured: Heidi Hostert and Carol Doolittle

Before COVID-19 cancelled many events in Holt County, the 2020 HomeTown Leadership Institute was able to complete one class in March of 2020. The first and only class of 2020 took place at the O'Neill Depot Building. The class was introduced to each other, the HomeTown Leadership program, and completed a Gallup's CliftonStrengths (formerly StrengthsFinder) training with Nicole Sedlacek.

All participants from the 2020 HomeTown Leadership class have agreed to come back in 2021 to complete their leadership training. Classes will resume in March 2021.

HomeTown Leadership Institute (HLI) is a county-wide leadership program in Holt County, NE organized by Holt County Economic Development. It's the opportunity for Holt County residents to gain professional development, further personal leadership skills, learn about different aspects of Holt County, and become more involved in their communities. Participants learn about strengths-based leadership, economic development, housing, agriculture, entrepreneurship, education, government, health & wellness, community foundations, and nonprofits. Since 2005, 189 Holt County residents have graduated from the HomeTown Leadership Institute.

"HomeTown Leadership Institute is beneficial to all members of Holt County. Through the class I was exposed to a lot of businesses and services Holt County offers that I was unaware of. We belong to a community with a lot to offer that is committed to facilitating growth. I now have a better idea of how I can serve not only the town I live in, but the entire county as a whole. It was fun to get to know members of the surrounding towns and come together to see how we can help one another. I walked away from each monthly class with at least one piece of new information and goals to better serve our community."

Brooke Farewell, HLI Class XV, 2019

1st ANNUAL NORTH CENTRAL NEBRASKA JOB FAIR

In collaboration with UNL Extension in Holt/Boyd Counties, Northeast Community College, O'Neill, O'Neill Chamber of Commerce, and Atkinson Economic Development; Holt County Economic Development hosted the 1st Annual North Central Nebraska Job Fair on February 12, 2020. The event was attended by 30 area businesses and organizations and 80 job seekers. At least one business found 4 strong candidates during the job fair and eventually hired all of them. One job seeker was seeking employment off of the farm and found a job during the job fair.



ATTRACTING YOUNG FAMILIES TO HOLT COUNTY

We've always known it was important to have high-quality education and childcare to attract new, young families to Holt County. In 2020, push came to shove to make this happen. The communities of Stuart, Atkinson, and O'Neill began putting plans into action to add early childhood development centers and more daycares to their communities. Stuart had been previously accepted into the Communities For Kids (C4K) family, a subsidiary of Nebraska Children and Families Foundation who supports children, young adults, and families at risk with the overall goal of giving our state's most vulnerable kids what they need to thrive. From this partnership, a survey was created to identify the extent of their child care shortage. It was surprising to find that 31 children from 0 to 5 years of age were presently unable to find licensed child care in that 1 community. This attributes to our lacking ability to attract young families to not only this one community but to Holt County as a whole. In the past year, Atkinson Economic Development, who participated in those meetings also applied and were accepted into the C4K family and are currently surveying their community in order to find their own community results. During this time, community members in O'Neill were gathering to discover the same needs as most rural communities, the lack of sufficient child care. O'Neill is currently applying to become a member of the C4K network. With the C4K guidance, we will have a better understanding of what is needed in each community and guided through the steps on how better to combat this need. By strengthening our current child care provider network, we intend to increase the number of children that can be cared for, across the county.



You may wonder how insufficient child care relates to economic development. Without this service, we are unable to attract or retain young families to this area and our business struggle to find employees. With families trying to move into our county, we need to be able to provide the necessary services they require. With the recent implementation of fiber optic broadband across the county, people can easily work anywhere from right here in rural Nebraska. We take the education of our children very seriously and the science behind educating our children from age 0-5 can prevent learning disabilities that the taxpayers end up paying for, from ages 6 - 21. For every \$7 invested in children's education from age 0-5, science has proven a \$13 return on that investment. There is no doubt this a worthwhile endeavor that we must invest in for our communities, our businesses, and the future of Holt County. If you are interested in becoming a part of the solution to early childcare, please reach out to our agency and we will put you in contact with the groups of individuals who are working to solve this issue.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

7/1/2019 - 6/30/2020

REVENUE

Community Contributions	\$67,201.54
Grant Income	94,000.00
Programming	10,533.71
Leadership Tuition	2,775.00
Sponsorships & Donations	6,542.00
TOTAL REVENUE	\$181,052.25

EXPENDITURES

Building Expense	\$2,602.52
Capital Expenditures	0.00
Depreciation	837.79
Employee Insurance	16,498.80
Employee Retirement & Benefits	5,145.08
Payroll Tax	6,239.81
Professional Fees	7,063.82
Programming	12,632.15
Salary & Wages	90,578.17
Supplies & Publishing	4,557.04
Training, Outreach - All Staff	2,845.38
Utilities	6,936.23
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$156,851.41

Excess of Revenue	
Over Expenditures	\$24,200.84

Fund Balance, July 1, 2019	\$131,301.65
Fund Balance, June 30, 2020	\$153,834.98

THANK YOU!

to our supporters and partners

PLATINUM

Rudolph Ellis Grant
BHE Renewables/Grand Prairie Wind Farm
Pinnacle Bank, O'Neill
Tri-County Bank of Stuart, Atkinson, & O'Neill

GOLD

Brian & Nicole Sedlacek, O'Neill

BRONZE

Matt & Tracy Dennis, O'Neill
J & L Collision Center, O'Neill
Diversified Electrical Contractors, Page

SUPPORTER

Markita Klinger/Briar Park R.V. Park, Atkinson

SUPPORTING PARTNERS

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

County of Holt County

ECONOMIC INDICATORS

Annual Taxable Sales	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Holt County	108,446,542	103,764,538	108,414,093	106,841,524	119,653,081
Atkinson	19,172,770	17,929,038	18,311,995	18,886,819	19,479,588
O'Neill	74,044,338	72,135,745	74,701,209	73,142,064	85,392,506
Stuart	7,149,669	6,449,620	7,731,356	7,083,888	8,607,192

Source: Nebraska Department of Revenue - Motor Vehicle Sales excluded

Annual Lodging Tax (refunded to county)	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Holt County	\$118,246.58	\$133,093.63	\$122,714.97	\$104,260.57	\$121,044.18

Source: Nebraska Department of Revenue

Unemployment Rate	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Holt County	2.5	2.6	2.6	2.5	2.6
Nebraska	4.2	3.0	2.9	2.9	3.3
National	8.1	3.5	3.9	4.4	4.9

Source: Nebraska Department of Labor, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2020

New Businesses

Juju Bean Coffee Shop, Atkinson
Bubbles Daycare
Alder Plumbing, LLC, O'Neill
Three River, O'Neill
Cactus Family Farms
Red Star Transport, LLC
Atkinson Community Thrift Shop, Atkinson
Charf Therapy & Holistic Wellness, O'Neill
Galyen, Boetcher, Baier PC, LLO, O'Neill
Village Flower Shop, O'Neill
Handlebend Tap Room, O'Neill
ZL Photography
Shelter Insurance, O'Neill

Mailboxes

A total of 126 mailboxes were delivered to Holt County graduating seniors.

Stuart	10
Chambers	6
O'Neill	52
St. Mary's	12
West Holt	28
Ewing	18

HCED BOARD OF DIRECTORS

ATKINSON	O'NEILL
Jim Brennan	Sarah Sidak
Amanda Sindelar	Scott Menish
CHAMBERS	PAGE
Wayne Green	Cora Calkins
EMMET	STUART
Christine Troshynski	Mark Stracke
	Amanda Paxton
EWING	HOLT COUNTY
Sharon Swails	Dave Hickey
James Ramold	Bill Tielke
INMAN	
Open	

HCED TEAM

Darby Paxton

Executive Director
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Kristi Peterson

Project Manager
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Linda Green

Administrative Assistant
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Holt County Economic Development (HCED) is an affiliated fund of the Nebraska Community Foundation. HCED is dedicated to fostering the growth of local businesses, connecting employers with job seekers, and developing the Holt County community as a whole. You can learn more about HCED at www.GrowHolt.com.

Holt County Economic Development

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