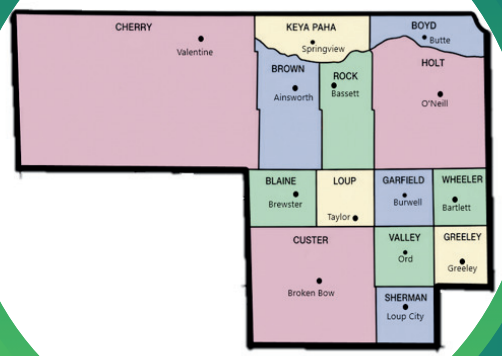
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ANNUAL REPORT

CNEDD



2025-2026

THE DIRECTOR'S CORNER



Dear Members, Partners, and Friends,

In June, families gathered in Wolbach to celebrate more than a new splash pad and playground. They celebrated what happens when a community's vision becomes reality. With a **$430,000 grant and strong local support**, an idea became an investment in the community's future.

That's what CNEDD is all about—turning ideas into action and plans into progress. From helping Lynch plan a fitness center to helping Long Pine, Springview, and Arcadia demonstrate their eligibility for grant funding, CNEDD provides the expertise and support communities need to move forward. Big things are happening in our small towns, and we're proud to help make them possible.

Looking ahead, the challenges are real, but so are the opportunities. Housing, workforce, childcare, infrastructure, and business growth remain at the forefront of our efforts.
Our mission is clear: *help build stronger communities where families want to stay, businesses can succeed, and future generations have every reason to call Central Nebraska home.*

None of this happens alone. To our members, partners, and communities, thank you for your trust, determination, and commitment to making Central Nebraska better.

Wolbach is just one example of what's possible when we work together. There's more to accomplish, and CNEDD is ready to help make it happen.
How can CNEDD help your community in 2027?

With gratitude,
Carla Kimball, CNEDD Executive Director

FROM THE STAFF



Great things are happening in our small communities, and that progresshas little to do with population size. Across our 14-county region, people are stepping up, working together, and turning vision into action. Their commitment to progress is creating opportunities, strengthening communities, and building a foundation for the next generation. Rural communities may be small in size, but they are big in determination, heart, and vision for the future.
- Tish Tielke, Financial Manager



Over the years, I've seen just how much can be accomplished when people come together and work toward a common goal. Every project takes time, dedication, and teamwork, and I'm proud that CNEDD gets to be part of that process. I look forward to another year of helping our communities turn their plans into progress.
- Deanna Tomjack, Marketing Specialist



This year has yielded fresh personal and professional satisfaction for me in my role. I'm thankful for the opportunity to aid my hometown with projects that I am confident will make a meaningful difference; additionally, I've been afforded the chance to work directly with new communities and foster connections with folks who are eager to make an impact for the places they serve. One thing that remains the same is my gratitude for the wholesome mission behind what I do and the people I am fortunate enough to work with.
- LaNae Maxson, Community Development Specialist



I am grateful for the opportunity to work alongside the people of Central Nebraska and play a small role in helping communities bring their visions for their cities, towns, and counties to life. Their commitment to improving the quality of life and creating opportunities for future generations continues to inspire me every day. It has been a rewarding year filled with meaningful projects, and I look forward to all that the coming year will bring.
- Chrystal Curtis, Community Development Specialist

WOLBACH PARK UPGRADES: SPLASH PAD AND PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT



June 11 was a gloriously warm day, and the energy in Wolbach was electric. Excitement was high as everyone, especially the kids, looked forward to the opening of the new splash pad and playground.

Presenters at the ribbon cutting included representatives from the Village of Wolbach, Senator Deb Fischer's office, Congressman Adrian Smith's office, the Department of Economic Development, Miller & Associates, Dostals Construction, and CNEDD.



This project was made possible through a **$430,000 Community Development Block Grant** from the Nebraska Department of Economic Development, as well as **$189,400 in matching funds** from local donors, alumni, and community fundraising.



Projects like this do more than add amenities. They bring people together, create a welcoming place for families, and show what can happen when partners at the local, regional, and state levels work toward a shared vision. We were proud to celebrate this milestone with Wolbach and the reality of a dream that families will enjoy for many years to come.



COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (CEDS)

CNEDD has been working to update its Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for 2026–2030, funded through the Economic Development Administration. This five-year plan helps guide economic development efforts throughout CNEDD's 14-county region by identifying **regional strengths, challenges, and opportunities** for future growth. The CEDS serves as an important planning tool, helping **establish priorities and identify projects** that may benefit from state and federal funding opportunities.

As part of the update, CNEDD conducted a region-wide survey to gather input from local officials, economic development professionals, and community organizations. The responses helped identify several important needs throughout the region, including housing, workforce development, childcare, infrastructure improvements, and business development. This information, along with regional economic and demographic data, helped shape the goals and strategies outlined in the plan.

The draft CEDS was made available for public review and comment, giving residents and community leaders an additional opportunity to provide feedback. Once approved, the updated strategy will help CNEDD and its partners focus their efforts on projects that strengthen local economies, improve quality of life, and support the long-term success of Central Nebraska communities. It can be found at **www.cnedd.org/ceds**.

IMPACT MAP

The Nebraska Regional Officials Council (NROC), made up of Nebraska's eight Economic Development Districts, has worked together to develop a statewide Project Impact Map. Created following a strategic planning effort, this interactive map highlights **grant and loan-funded projects throughout Nebraska**, giving the public an opportunity to explore the work being done to strengthen communities across the state.

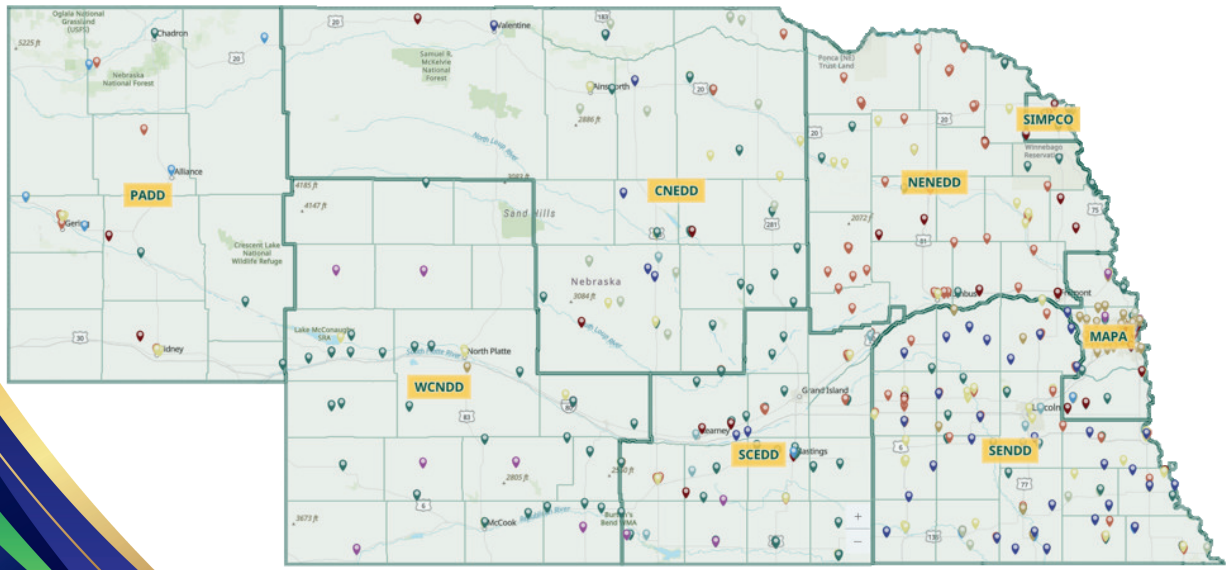
Each Economic Development District, including CNEDD, has contributed project information to help build a more complete picture of the investments being made throughout Nebraska. From infrastructure improvements and community facilities to housing development and business assistance, the map showcases the variety of projects that support economic growth and improve quality of life. It also demonstrates the *important role the Districts play in helping communities identify funding opportunities, develop projects, and turn local priorities into reality*.

The impact of these efforts is significant. As of 2026, NROC's reported statewide figures reflected approximately ***$443.7 million in economic impact***, with more than **140,500 households** and **2,400 businesses** impacted, along with **734 jobs created**. These numbers demonstrate how regional partnerships and access to funding can make a lasting difference in communities of all sizes.

The map continues to grow as Districts add new projects and update existing information. While it does not yet represent every project completed throughout the state, it provides a valuable starting point for documenting the collective accomplishments of Nebraska's Economic Development Districts. It also gives community leaders, funding partners, and residents an opportunity to see where investments are being made and the types of improvements taking place across the state.

For CNEDD, the Project Impact Map is another way to highlight the progress happening throughout Central Nebraska while demonstrating the importance of regional cooperation. Behind every project is a community working toward a goal, and Economic Development Districts play an important role in helping make those goals possible.

Explore the interactive Project Impact Map:
https://www.nrocne.com



NUISANCE ABATEMENT



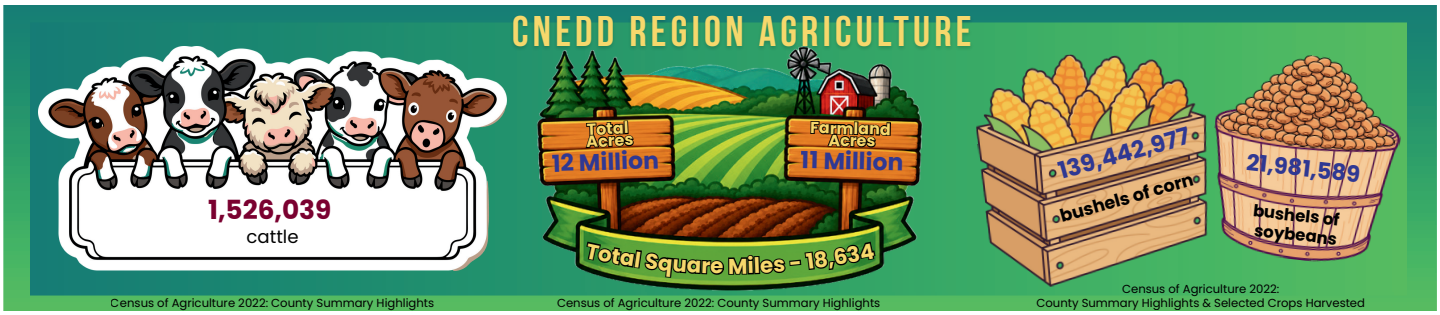
CNEDD has expanded its services to include nuisance abatement, helping communities throughout Central Nebraska address problem properties and improve the appearance, safety, and overall quality of their neighborhoods. Nuisance properties, including those with accumulated debris, abandoned vehicles, and deteriorating structures, can create challenges for smaller communities with limited staff and resources. CNEDD works alongside local officials to conduct property assessments, document potential code violations, and monitor progress over time.



This year, CNEDD conducted nuisance abatement assessments in the Village of Ashton. **Of the 50 properties reviewed, 13 were identified as nuisance properties. Of those 13, only three required minor abatement work.** These results show how property assessments help communities understand their nuisance concerns and focus efforts on properties needing more attention.

Nuisance abatement is about more than addressing individual problem properties. Well-maintained neighborhoods encourage community pride, help protect property values, and create welcoming environments for residents and visitors. Through this service, CNEDD hopes to support lasting improvements that **benefit communities for years to come.**





INCOME DETERMINATION SURVEYS

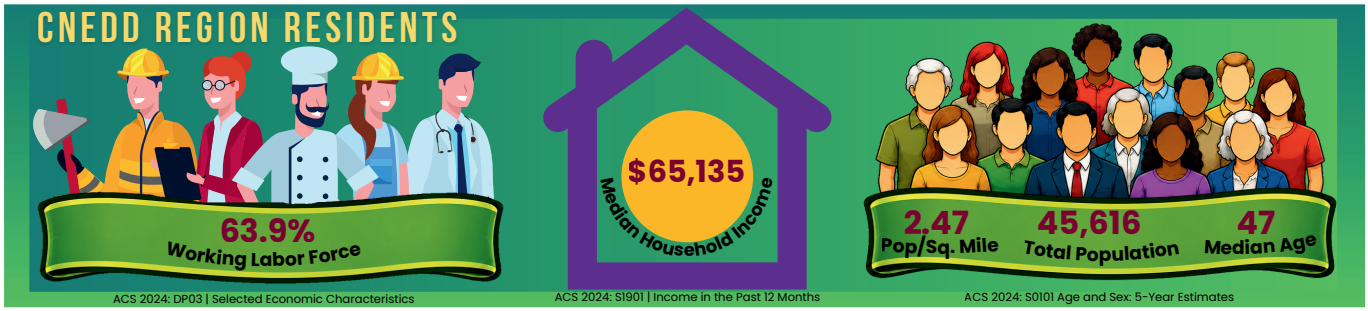


CNEDD works with communities to conduct income determination surveys to establish the percentage of low- and moderate-income households within a project area. These surveys can be an important step in qualifying for grant funding, particularly when **existing income data is in dispute with the community.** CNEDD staff assist with preparing and distributing surveys, collecting responses, and compiling the results. The process requires cooperation between CNEDD, local officials, and residents to gather the information necessary to determine eligibility.

This year, CNEDD assisted Long Pine, Springview, and Arcadia with income determination surveys. All three communities **successfully** challenged their existing income data and demonstrated their eligibility for potential grant funding. Each survey required considerable time and effort from both CNEDD staff and the communities themselves. The willingness of local officials and residents to participate in the process played an important role in achieving these successful outcomes. These efforts provide the communities with additional opportunities to pursue funding for infrastructure improvements and other community projects.

VILLAGE OF LYNCH PLANNING GRANT

The Village of Lynch received a **$15,000 planning grant** from the Civic and Community Center Financing Fund (CCCFF) administered by the Nebraska Department of Economic Development. With **$15,000 in matching funds** , the village will move forward with planning for a new community center. The planning process will include engineering and architectural drawings and financial considerations for the construction of a new fitness center at 317 West Ponca Street in Lynch. Demolition of the building currently on the site is anticipated.



CNEDD AND 6 REGIONS 1 NEBRASKA (6R1N)

The 6 Regions, One Nebraska (6R1N) initiative was launched to encourage regional cooperation rather than competition. While organized around community college boundaries, Nebraska's **eight established economic development districts**, the Nebraska Regional Officials Council (NROC), contributed their **experience, partnerships,** and **coordination** to help move the initiative into workable projects. CNEDD's service area overlapped three of the six regions: Northeast, Mid-Plains, and Central.

- Northeast Region – https://northeastnebraska.org/housing
  - CNEDD secured a **$200,000 Regional Development Initiative grant** and took a leading role in developing a bilingual housing resource website. The website brings together housing studies, available programs, and resources for developers and community officials. CNEDD's leadership and coordination were instrumental in moving this project forward.
  - SPARK Developer Academy
    - Through the Northeast Region's collaborative efforts, the SPARK Developer Academy was brought to Norfolk in 2026, providing training in real estate development, financing, and project planning. Fourteen participants, including CNEDD Executive Director **Carla Kimball**, graduated from the program, gaining valuable knowledge and connections to support future housing development.



- Mid-Plains Region – https://www.mpcc.edu/mid-plains-housing-plan.php
  - The Workforce Housing Revitalization Project focused on housing assessments, identifying growth opportunities, developing regional data resources, and strengthening the skilled-trades workforce to support housing development and rehabilitation.
- Central Region – Child Care Champions
  - The Child Care Champions initiative focused on expanding childcare availability through mentorship, startup stipends, and licensing assistance for aspiring childcare providers.

Although the initial funding phase has concluded, these projects demonstrate **the role CNEDD and the rest of the Nebraska Regional Officials Council (NROC)** played in turning a statewide initiative into **meaningful opportunities for rural communities.**

GRANT WORK THIS YEAR

IN PROGRESS

Burwell - $435,000 - *Downtown Revitalization* - CDBG
Burwell - $630,000 - *Public Works Infrastructure Lift Station* - CDBG
Greeley - $53,000 - *Planning Grant* - CDBG
Greeley - $630,000 - *Public Works Infrastructure Streets* - CDBG
Long Pine - $35,000 - *Comprehensive Plan* - CDBG
Lynch - $15,000 - *Community Fitness Center Planning* - CCCFF
North Loup - $380,000 - *Park Improvements* - CDBG
Scotia - $480,000 - *Public Works Infrastructure Streets* - CDBG
Stuart Village Manor - $789,500 - *Two New Rental Duplexes* - NAHTF
Wolbach - $433,000 - *Public Recreation Improvements* - CDBG

AWAITING APPROVAL

Arcadia - $630,000 - *Public Works Infrastructure* - CDBG
Berwyn - $630,000 - *Public Works Infrastructure* - CDBG
Broken Bow - $53,000 - *Planning Grant* - CDBG
Callaway - $630,000 - *Public Works Infrastructure* - CDBG
Greeley County - $900,000 - *Courthouse Improvements* - CPF
Greeley County - $400,000 - *Deputy and Patrol Car* - DOJ
North Loup - $630,000 - *Public Works Infrastructure* - CDBG
Mason City - $630,000 - *Public Works Infrastructure* - CDBG
Merna Rural Fire District - $207,000 - *Bunker & Wildland Gear, Oxygen Packs* - CPF

CLOSING OUT

Ansley - $39,000 - *Planning Grant* - CDBG
Bartlett - $420,279 - *Street Improvements* - CDBG
Burwell - $516,520 - *Single-Family Home Construction* - NAHTF
Cherry County - $385,039 - *Tourism* - CDBG
Ewing - $431,640 - *Rental Duplex Construction* - NAHTF
Valentine - $500,000 - *Single-Family Home Construction* - NAHTF
CNHED, Inc. - $599,500 - *Down Payment Assistance/Minor Rehab* - NAHTF
CNHED, Inc. - $599,500 - *Owner-Occupied Housing Rehab* - NAHTF
CNEDD - $200,000 - *6 Regions, 1 Nebraska Housing* - RDI 6R1N

REPURPOSED

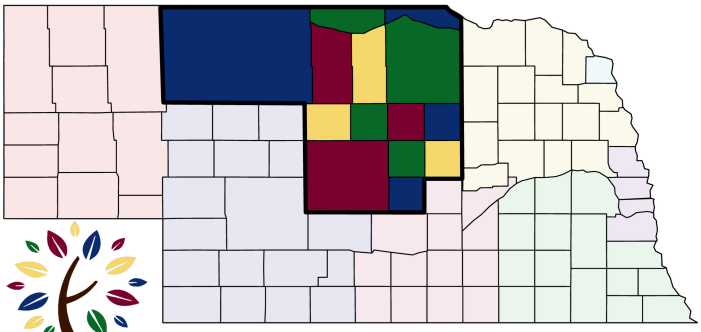
Ainsworth - $158,000 - *Street Lights* - CDBG Repurposed
Bassett - $45,000 - *Bathroom Remodel* - CDBG Repurposed
Custer County - $216,000 - *Owner-Occupied Rehab* - NAHTF
Sargent - $103,000 - *Public Works* - CDBG Repurposed
Stuart - $370,000 - *Public Works* - CDBG Repurposed
Valentine - $36,000 - *Public Works* - CDBG Repurposed

FUNDING SOURCES

CCCFF - Civic and Community Center Financing Fund
CDBG - Community Development Block Grant
CPF - Community Project Funding (Congressionally Directed Funding)
DOJ - Department of Justice
NAHTF - Nebraska Affordable Housing Trust Fund
RDI 6R1N - Regional Development Initiative 6 Regions, 1 Nebraska

CNEDD BOARD MEMBERS

ED BROWN (LONG PINE) - **CHAIR**
CHERYL CARSON (ARNOLD) - **VICE CHAIR**
KRISTY BEARD (BASSETT) - **TREASURER**
MELISSA WENGER (SPRINGVIEW)
ALVIN JOHNSON (ARCADIA)
DEBORAH RITZ (COMSTOCK)
ANNE GIBBONS (CUSTER COUNTY)
KELLE RASMUSSEN (WHEELER COUNTY)





CNEDD has been a driving force of rural economic development through pursuit of available grant monies for many years. They have helped obtain **millions of dollars** in direct assistance to many of the communities within its 14-county region. As a member of the Executive Board (Chairman for the last several years), I want to thank Carla and her entire team for their contributions to the success of CNEDD and the many communities which received much-needed grants.
- Ed Brown, Mayor of the City of Long Pine

The residents of Central Nebraska are very fortunate to have the staff of CNEDD working full-time to assist the counties and cities in the region with a wide variety of development projects. Fortunately, a large number of volunteers serve on the boards of CNEDD and CNHED, Inc. to assist and direct the staff. **This cooperative spirit is what results in continued progress in our region.** The efforts of this entire group do not go unnoticed or unappreciated. Thank you to all involved in the betterment of our area!
- John Madsen, VP of Wm. Krotter, Co.



CNHED, INC. BOARD MEMBERS

JOHN MADSEN (STUART) - **CHAIR**
ED BROWN (LONG PINE)
CRAIG BREWSTER (BUTTE)
KRISTIN OLSON (AINSWORTH)

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