



Our mission is to encourage economic development and growth and improve the business conditions of the Falls City area.

Falls City Receives 2013 Governor's Showcase Award



On April 2nd, Gov. Dave Heineman presented the City of Falls City with the 2013 Governor's Showcase Award at the States Award Ceremony held during National Community Development week in Lincoln, NE. This award is given to communities who demonstrate exceptional capacity in the last five years by indentifying community development goals and strategies; combining local, state, and federal resources to achieve those goals; and accomplishing major projects with positive impacts on the community.

National Community Development (CD) Week 2013 was held March 31-April 6, 2013. The [National Community Development Association](#) initiated National CD Week in 1986. This annual campaign is designed to give local as well as national attention on the numerous outstanding accomplishments over the past 39 years of the [Community Development Block Grant \(CDBG\)](#) program and

more than 20 years on the [HOME Investment Partnerships \(HOME\) Program](#).

The State of Nebraska and the [Nebraska Department of Economic Development](#) celebrated this national event by designating communities with high achievement in community and economic development as Showcase Communities. This year marks the 27th anniversary of the promotion of National Community Development Week.

Up to three communities in the entire State may be selected as Showcase Communities. Falls City was the only community selected for this award. The nomination, submitted by Kevin Malone, VP of Marketing & Sales, highlighted many of Falls City's recent accomplishments including the \$23 million dollar Consolidated Grain and Barge (CGB) high-speed grain terminal.

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Airlanco/AGI Awarded Substantial CGB Contract

The Consolidated Grain and Barge project is on track thanks to a mild winter and many changes have occurred since the groundbreaking ceremony 4 months ago. CGB's contractors, MBI Construction of Effingham, IL and Custom Agri-Builders of Washington, IN have settled into the Falls City community and are working hard to meet the goal of being open for business during the 2013 harvest. Once complete, Falls City will be home to a state of the art, high speed looped track grain terminal served by Burlington Northern Santa Fe railroad.

CGB is a great win for the community and we know the list of benefits, including capital investment and job creation, is something to celebrate. We see the trucks entering and exiting the highway in a routine fashion, roads being built, cranes working at a steady pace, and cement is being poured daily. Employees are working in all weather conditions to get the job done. Slowly, area citizens can begin to envision what the site will look like once complete.



Airlanco products are being delivered to the CGB site

It's an exciting time to be involved in economic development as we hear all the good reports being shared by those directly involved in the many facets of construction including Paul Franzmann, Senior Vice President of Operations at AGI who states, "Ag Growth International (AGI) is thrilled that CGB chose our Airlanco, Union Iron (Decatur, IL), and Hi Roller (Sioux Falls, SD) family of products for their conveying and conditioning requirements at the new grain handling facility in Falls City, Nebraska. CGB is a valued customer of Ag Growth International and this is a key multi-million dollar project for both the Falls City/Richardson County area and AGI. This location will be a great showcase for the breadth of the product offerings AGI has for commercial grain facilities."

AGI, parent company of Airlanco, is a leading manufacturer of grain handling, conditioning and storage equipment, providing solutions from the farm gate to commercial grain handling and processing operations around the world. CGB is installing a myriad of these manufactured products including hoppers, conveyors, elevators, and conditioning equipment at their newly constructed Falls City, NE location. Airlanco, specifically, is providing a rail pit hopper and receiving pit hoppers for unloading grain, aeration fans, transitions, and flooring for two (2) one hundred five foot diameter grain bins, two (2) seventy five foot diameter grain bins, and one (1) thirty foot diameter hopper bin. Aeration is used to control the temperature and condition the grain preventing spoilage, allowing grain to be stored safely, even well after harvest has been completed. Eric Kresin, Regional Manager, CGB, stated "CGB is proud to have Airlanco, Union Iron and Hi Roller as preferred vendors because they produce quality products, provide great customer service and their products are competitively priced."

AGI's commercial manufacturing divisions have provided handling equipment to farmers, grain elevators, processors, and port facilities for over 125 years. Tom Zant, Vice President, Commercial Products Group, of AGI recently visited Falls City and spoke about the broadened partnership he sees unfolding for Airlanco, AGI, and CGB in the future noting, "CGB is building a high tech facility with AGI components and our sales staff will be bringing customers, both current and future, to Falls City to view this showcase facility. This development project will certainly assist in the growth of AGI companies, including Airlanco."

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Some of the other leading brands in the AGI family of companies include Westfield grain augers, Tranco heavy-duty conveyors and Batco portable belt conveyors. More information about AGI can be found at www.aggrowth.com.

\$5,000 Dollar Worker Training Grant Awarded

[Southeast Nebraska Partners for Progress \(P4P\)](#), in partnership with [Southeast Community College](#), joined forces to offer a Supervisor Boot Camp Certification Course. Twenty five of our region's emerging leaders participated in this essential foundational leadership skills class. Alison Kerl, Human Resources Manager, Airlanco, Inc. reported, “The supervisor Boot Camp training was very good and I look forward to continuing to work with EDGE and businesses in surrounding communities to be able to bring more training and development to Falls City and Airlanco. I really appreciate your help.”

The Course Provided Training in:

- Transitioning more effectively into a new supervisory role
- Avoid the 10 most common pitfalls confronting new supervisors
- Learn three skills needed to master to become an effective leader
- Making the psychological and social transition from the line employee to supervisor
- Managing the Multi-Generational Workforce
- Keeping out of legal hot water with workforce issues



Alison Kerl, Airlanco, attends the Supervisor Boot Camp Certification Course in Nebraska City, NE

Nebraska Economic Development Association's Legislative Day



The [Nebraska Economic Development Association's \(NEDA\)](#) legislative day was held on February 6-7 in Lincoln at the Capitol. NEDA members, including EDGE Executive Director Beckie Cromer, met with state senators to discuss economic development and tourism-related legislation.

Specific bills discussed included:

- [LB 281](#) increases the refundable tax credit available under the Angel Investment Tax Credit Act, which provides refundable state income tax credits to qualified investors that invest in early-stage companies, from the current level of \$3 million annually to \$5 million annually.
- [LB 476](#) modifies the provisions of the InternNE program to allow more flexibility for business, educational institutions, and students with a focus on quality internships in the technical and professional arenas.
- [LB 295](#) adds "relocation incentives for new residents" to the list of activities that may be included in a municipalities LB 840 economic development plan..
- [LB 104](#) amends the Nebraska Advantage Act by adding a Tier 7 which would apply to investments in renewable energy.

“Thank you for stopping by my office and briefing me on the bills that were of interest to NEDA,” stated Senator Dan Watermeier, District 1. “I appreciated your input on these issues.”

NEDA members encouraged state senators to maintain contact with their the economic development officials in the communities they represent as a source of information when researching and discussing economic development issues that directly impact Nebraska communities.

Airlanco (cont.)



The CGB project encapsulates a wide scope of economic development activities in a broad range of areas including construction, manufacturing, agriculture and engineering. It's amazing to see how the project has come together in just a short time and look for more exciting changes in the month of April. Bin-jackers will be on site to begin the erection of the grain bins as the project continues to move in fast forward.

To follow all the latest news and updates on the CGB project, visit the Falls City EDGE website news blog at www.fallscityedge.com/news.aspx.

CGB Impact - By the Numbers

- *On average, 40-70 employees are on-site daily depending on work being performed.*
- *Approximately \$1.5 to \$2 million dollars in contracts have been awarded to area companies.*
- *Temporary citizens living in the area, 25-30. These residents spend money which becomes valuable income to area businesses.*
- *Nearly 10+ Local Contractors are providing services to the project.*

Elk Creek Niobium Project: Positive Changes

Many positive changes are happening with the Niobium project in Elk Creek, Nebraska. In recognition of the ongoing focus, and to better reflect development plans at the Elk Creek Niobium site, the name of the company recently known as Quantum Rare Earth Developments Corp. has been changed to [NioCorp Developments Ltd.](#)

In February, the company added former Nebraska State Senator, Tony Fulton, to the Advisory Board. A life-long resident of the Elk Creek area, Mr. Fulton is a graduate of the University of Nebraska and a mechanical engineer by profession. Mr. Fulton was recently a key figure affecting the Keystone XL pipeline, another Nebraska project by a Canadian company, pushing forth with a positive business position accompanied with sound environmental considerations. Mr. Fulton commented, "Folks in southeast Nebraska have been talking about this project in Elk Creek for some time, and I enthusiastically offer my expertise and experience in bringing the project to fruition."

Mark A. Smith was also recently appointed to the Advisory Board. Mr. Smith is well recognized in the mining community, having recently served as CEO and Director of Molycorp, Inc., where he was instrumentally involved in taking that from a private company to a publicly traded producing mine. Molycorp, Inc. was the company that explored the Elk Creek site in the 1980s.

"We are pleased to move forward with this change, to better reflect the direction and focus of the Company," stated Peter Dickie, President and CEO. "We believe the new additions of Mark Smith, former Molycorp CEO, and Tony Fulton, former State Senator in Nebraska, to the Advisory Board, is indicative of the confidence in our Niobium project."

[For more information on the Elk Creek Niobium Project >>](#)

Showcase Award (cont.)



The terminal expects to handle high volumes of grain and soybeans, create full-time jobs, and help spark further economic development projects in the area. CGB broke ground in December and expects to be operational by September 2013. Funding for the project included CDBG funds, LB840, Tax Increment Financing (TIF), EDGE funds, as well as New Market Tax Credits.

The city's new baseball and softball sports complex was also applauded during the ceremony. This project became a reality thanks to a community-wide grassroots effort that surpassed the \$1.765 million dollar fundraising goal which included a \$100,000 dollar Peter Kiewit Foundation grant, money from the Richardson Foundation, donations from local fundraising projects, assistance from the local lodging tax, 350 private donors, and the City of Falls City in-kind contributions. Children and adults alike can expect to "Play Ball" at the new complex this summer.

The presentation concluded with compliments about the city's \$573,000 dollar Downtown Revitalization Streetscape project. Main Street Falls City led the efforts by combining resources which included a \$350,000 dollar CDBG grant from DED, the City of Falls City contributing \$111,000 along with \$112,000 from Main Street.

Visit www.fallscityedge.com/news.aspx to read more on other outstanding CDBG projects.

ESU 4 Energy Event Day

ESU 4 recently hosted an Energy Event Day for area schools participating in the ESU 4 Energy Academy.

High School students from Falls City, Humboldt and Auburn participated in a variety of events that focused on the science and careers associated with energy. Bryan Mellage, Mellage Truck and Tractor, and Roger Hunt, Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD), discussed energy efficiency with a blower door demonstration. Northeast Community College (NECC) brought students from the electrical lineman program and the wind technician program. The NECC students provided demonstrations of what they are learning in class, as well as answering questions about their college experience. Troy Wynn, Auburn Board of Public Works, demonstrated climbing a utility pole and discussed safety procedures.



(Far left) Brady Cromer, Falls City, works with other students to design a wind turbine blade.

Students also worked with Chad Johnson, NPPD Energy Education Specialist, and discussed the responsibilities that go along with the decisions that we make in electricity usage. At lunch, students were able to ask questions and find out more about careers in the field of energy from NPPD engineers employed at Cooper Nuclear Station. In addition, Dallas Beshaler, NPPD Human Resources, shared with the students information on the variety of career fields available in the energy industry. Finally, Joel Jacobs, University of Nebraska at Lincoln, brought a wind tunnel so students could design wind turbine blades and test them in the tunnel to see which was the most efficient. "Students were excited about the day," said Denise Oestmann, Auburn Energy Academy instructor. "They discussed what they had experienced all the way back to school. It was a great day of learning."

Upcoming Events

April 28th – Ballpark Dedication Ceremony, 2:00 PM at Fiedler Family Ball Complex (Dallas Jones Park)

June 19th - Southeast Nebraska Resource Network (SERN) Quarterly Meeting, 9:00 AM at Personal Care Inc.

July - Missouri River Bridge Opening Ceremony (date and time TBD)

Record Membership for Falls City EDGE

Charlie Radatz and the EDGE Investor Recruitment Team have been working hard over the last few months on the current investment drive to help fund economic development in Falls City and the surrounding area, as well as bring new people and ideas into the organization. Over 450 letters were mailed to past supporters and newly identified businesses and individuals who want to see this community grow and prosper with expanding employment opportunities for the present and future generations.

Falls City EDGE has 150+ public and private Investors that have pledged their financial support. We have seen remarkable growth in the number of EDGE Investors in 2013 with the addition of approximately 65 new investors resulting in over \$21,500 dollars in new investments. Thanks to our Investor Recruitment Team, EDGE's membership has reached a record high of 158 member investors.

"Agriculture is our number one industry, and we are seeing greater support than ever from agricultural producers," said Chairman Charlie Radatz. "Investments are not only being made by our present day employers and business operators but by retired business owners and professionals and former residents of the area who have gone on to enjoy success in their business and professional lives elsewhere. We appreciate the confidence the community has in our ability to continue encouraging economic development and growth of the Falls City/Richardson County area."

The hard working volunteers of the Investor Recruitment Team include, Charlie Radatz, Andy Dunn, Bart Keller, Beth Sickel, Jerry Duerfeldt, John Martin, Kevin Malone, Madeline Wilhelm, Rod Vandeberg, and Steve Severin.

New members of 2013 include the following:

Visionary Investor

(\$5,000 and greater)

Consolidated Grain & Barge Co.

Catalyst Investors

(\$1,000-\$2,499)

Airlanco

Haws, Butch & Dobey

Knobbe, Kent & Jackie

Merz Farm Equipment

WASP, Inc.

Advocate Investors

(\$500-\$999)

Bauman Family Limited Partnership

Chaney Furniture Co.

Dan Scholl Seed

Edward Jones Investments

Goldsmith Abstract & Title Co.

Jorgensen Surveying

Kresin, Eric

Morrill Elevator, Inc.

Omaha Public Power District

Reesman Investment Corporation

Snethen Farms/Snethen Trucking Inc.

Supporter Investors

(individual & nonprofit level - \$100-\$499)

Bebermeyer, Charles & Jane

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Duerfeldt, Jerry & Linda

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Eickhoff, Al & Family

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Witt, Bob & Tammy

Witt, Rich & Susan

Witt, Tom & Cindy

Yount, Jerry & Denise

To learn more about EDGE's program of work and how you can join us in shaping the future of Falls City, visit the [EDGE website](#) or contact Beckie Cromer, Executive Director, at 402.245.2105 or email director@fallscityedge.com

A Message from the Director

Ames True Temper (ATT) announced it will be closing the local plant by the end of 2013. Falls City is one of many plants being closed in the ATT family of companies and being moved within a 20 mile radius of their Corporate Headquarters in Pennsylvania. Recently, announcements were also made in Bernie, MO, Dexter City, OH, and Lewiston, PA. This is a big loss for the entire region and the Falls City EDGE team will work diligently to market the building as well as help transition the 37 employees being impacted by the announcement.



EDGE President Bart Keller, City Administrator Gary Jorn and I met with Corporate Executives from Camp Hill, PA to discuss the closure and to devise a strategy of next steps the week of the announcement. ATT representatives were very complimentary of the cost of doing business in Falls City as well as the reliable workforce and strong work ethic of its employees. Location was our only disadvantage and therefore the decision to close the plant was firm and we were unable to negotiate an alternative course of action. We offered our assistance to ATT's real estate team, spearheaded by their parent company Griffon Corporation, tasked with the sale of the site and building and those present felt this would be a great partnership. They agreed to keep us posted once the building was ready to be placed in the real estate market. This will take some time as their main focus right now is their valuable employees. Falls City EDGE will keep lines of communication open with Corporate Executives in the coming months as we work together during this time of transition.

~Beckie Cromer, EDGE Executive Director

Falls City Economic Development & Growth Enterprise (EDGE)

1705 Stone Street, PO Box 574

Falls City, NE 68355

402.245.2105

info@fallscityedge.com

Beckie Cromer, Executive Director
Carla Rhodd, Administrative Assistant

Visit us online

www.fallscityedge.com

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