



Tri-State Corridor Alliance

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Thanks to the 1,600 citizens who took time to write a letter in support of replacement of the Missouri River bridge at Rulo and thanks to cities, villages, counties, schools, and businesses in Southeast Nebraska, Northwest Missouri, and Northeast Kansas who have passed resolutions of support for a new bridge, we are a lot closer to having a new bridge today than we were four short months ago. The bridge is unsafe and needs to be replaced.

The bridge is a keystone to good transportation infrastructure in the three-state region. It is a large long-range project that will require continuing efforts for several years. However, because of that great community support and the dedication and tenacious spirit of those who have come together to form the Tri-State Corridor Alliance, there is good reason to be optimistic the bridge will be built many years sooner than it otherwise might have been.

It was interesting to learn recently that the new bridge being built at Yankton, S.D. at this time was an outgrowth of an effort begun in 1988. A Yankton Chamber of Commerce leader told EDGE Director Chuck Whitney recently that it wasn't until a grassroots effort like ours begun in 1998 that real progress was made in accomplishing their goal.

Eight members of the Alliance recently made a trip to Washington, D.C. to meet with Congressmen, Senators, and their aides. Our first priority was to gain political support for an above budget allocation for \$1.2 million to assist the Nebraska Department of Roads and the Missouri Department of Transportation in their preparation of construction plans for a new bridge. Preliminary steps have already been taken to put such legislation in place. Our second priority was to begin building support for funding of the new bridge in the 2010 to 2015 Transportation Act.

The "Media Day" January 16th allowed us to make thousands of persons in Nebraska, Missouri, and Kansas aware of what a serious safety danger the bridge poses and the importance of the bridge to the economies of all three states. Over the past several months there have been meetings with 1st District Rep. Jeff Fortenberry, Nebraska Governor Dave Heineman, Director of the Nebraska Department of Roads John Craig, 1st District State Senator Lavon Heidemann, NDOR and MODOT officials including District One Highway Engineer Richard Ruby, and a former Director of NDOR, Al Abbott, who now works as an aide to U.S. Sen. Ben Nelson (NE). There also have been discussions with leaders from other communities that have been successful in solving transportation problems similar to ours. We have done our homework in learning how bridges are funded and built, and we are working to build support for replacement of the Rulo bridge.

One of the side benefits of this project has been the spirit of cooperation that has developed between governmental, civic, and economic development organizations in Southeast Nebraska, Northwest Missouri, and Northeast Kansas. Bridges are connecting links and some great "bridges" have already been built.

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Charlie Radatz, Chairman

Falls City News

Job Fair on March 19th by Beckie Cromer

Nebraska Workforce Development, in cooperation with many area partners, is pleased to bring you the 3rd annual Southeast Nebraska Job Fair. The job fair will be held Wednesday, March 19th from 2 - 6 p-m at the Auburn City Hall & Senior Citizen Center. Many area employers from Southeast Nebraska and Northeast Kansas will be recruiting qualified candidates in a variety of occupational areas. This is a busy recruiting time for many area employers and they will be looking to fill positions in production, service occupations, medical assisting, food processing, construction, welding, security, transportation and more. The Job Fair is a great opportunity to match employers and job seekers of the Falls City, Auburn, Beatrice and Nebraska City areas. Great opportunities await!

Falls City EDGE Lunch-n-Learn

Hosted by Bart Keller

Monday, April 21st

Monday, May 19th

Monday, June 16th

All meetings are to take place at 12:00 pm at Breadeaux Pizza.

These meetings are very informative and because only a small number of members are invited to each session, you are asked to make every attempt to make it. We want to keep the meetings short but informative so please r.s.v.p the Friday before by calling the EDGE office to let us know that you will be joining us and if you'll bringing a guest. 245-2105

Hospital Building Project Report - Ryan Larsen

Plans for construction of the new hospital are progressing rapidly. Though removal of a hedge line has already occurred, the official groundbreaking for construction will occur with a ceremony at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, April 20th, with major earthmoving commencing that week. All community members and businesses are invited to attend.

Excitement for the project seems strong, both within and outside the hospital. Charitable contributions toward construction of the new facility have now passed \$1 million, and it appears promising that we will reach the goal of our "Drive to One Point Five." We appreciate all those that have contributed to help further the vision for a new hospital to serve our community.

A CMC Spring Gala will be held Friday, March 28 at the Elks Club. Proceeds from the \$50-per-plate dinner will be used to support the Hospital Building Fund. A fine meal and entertainment program are planned. Attendance is by advance ticket only. Tickets may be obtained at the hospital or from a fundraising committee member. For additional information, please call our event coordinator at 245-6704.

Member Investors,

If you need the login member name and member password to access the EDGE web site, please contact Chuck at the office and as always, invite everyone you know to view the Falls City Edge web sites.

www.fallscityedge.com

www.fallscityonline.com

In the Region

Business Retention and Expansion (BR&E)

The Nebraska Department of Economic Development (NeDED) was in Falls City on February 21st and 22nd to conduct Business Visitation Program interviews. Business Retention and Expansion (BR&E) is an economic strategy that identifies red flags, opportunities for growth, expansion and helps NeDED build program strategies to respond to the needs of businesses.

Business Development Consultant with the NeDED, Whitney Bumgarner, contacted the EDGE office in January asking Chuck Whitney for assistance in arranging the schedule and appointments, as well as helping with the actual interviews. The list of businesses was compiled by the NeDED office and sent to EDGE to confirm the information as current and/or accurate. There were 196 businesses on the list and 60 of them agreed to meet and interview with the NeDED, and approximately 25 businesses participated by submitting an interview form directly to the Lincoln office.

Whitney Bumgarner brought additional Consultants with the NeDED to assist in the field interviews; Rich Stites, Dave Gilfillan, and Corinne Pedersen. Chuck Whitney and Katina Sample with EDGE participated in the interviews and sought assistance from Donna Landis (Falls City Chamber of Commerce) in order to have a local contact with each NeDED Consultant.

Immediate feedback from the NeDED Staff was positive and they were impressed with the amount of willing participants. Currently, the Nebraska Department of Economic Development Office is compiling information received and will contact Chuck Whitney when the process is complete. At that time, EDGE will invite Whitney Bumgarner to Falls City to do a presentation of the information obtained.

Labor Study

Mike Walker of Fort Hays State University, Docking Institute

Basic Approach: The approach is simple. We ask ourselves, "What would a prospective employer want to know about a local labor force?"

- Who is available?
- What are the characteristics of available workers?
- Do available workers possess needed skills or experiences to fill potential jobs?
- Are available workers willing to commute for a new or different job?
- What are the wage and benefit demands of available workers?
- Will available workers travel the necessary distance to the job site - and at what wages?



Summary: Examined Richardson County Labor Basin - Johnson, Nemaha, Pawnee and Richardson Counties in Nebraska; Atchison and Holt Counties in Missouri; and Brown, Nemaha and Doniphan Counties in Kansas.

Population: 62,985 & Civilian Labor Force: 33,883

Available Labor Pool: 13,274

- 26.6% Bachelor's Degree, 96.3% High School Diploma
- 21.6% General Labor, 11.7% Skilled Labor, 37.3% Service Sector, 19% Professional and 10.4% Non-Employed
- 86.1% will commute for 30 minutes one way, 40.5% for 45 minutes one way
- Health, good salary, OJT, vacation and retirement
- 34% (4,538) available at \$12.00 and hour (\$24,960 annually)
- 89% employed, 38% are underutilized

Looking to Expand or Relocate Inside Richardson County?

The City of Falls City has several funding resources available for eligible businesses and entrepreneurs seeking to grow. Contact the EDGE office to learn more, 245.2105.

In the Region

Facts From Your Director

A small building sitting empty for one year in a small town commercial district will have the following impact on the community.

Cost of An Empty Storefront...

- **\$250,000** in lost sales
- **\$12,500** in lost sales tax revenue to state and local government
- **\$15,000** in lost rents to the property owner
- **\$1,500** in lost property tax revenue to local government
- **\$51,000** in lost loan demand to local banks for the building
- **\$15,000** in lost loan demand to local banks for the business
- **\$750** in lost property management fees
- **\$24,750** in lost business profits and owner compensation
- **\$16,250** in lost employee payroll

I2E Club (Inventor, Investor & Entrepreneur Club)

This is a very exciting club! I2E is a free club that is open to anyone ~ consider it an overall network support group for individual business owners, retail establishments, entrepreneurs, and/or anyone that has an interest in furthering their invention (s), investments or business. I2E is not limited to any particular type of "money making" plan, it ranges from local food producers and sales to marketing and web design. Members of the club can answer your questions, guide you to new networking channels, provide you with valuable information on how to form an LLC, help developing a website, provide lending support information and alternative funding sources (including grant information)... just about anything you'd need pertaining to business start up, business retention, business expansion, including areas of interest on inventions and investing. Recently added to the club is a panel of insurance experts.

To date, participants are from the Falls City, Auburn, Brownville, Dunbar, Humboldt, Lincoln, Nebraska City, Nemaha, Omaha, Plattsmouth, Seward, Stromsburg, Syracuse, and Tecumseh areas. Speakers have been Dr. Connie Reimers-Hild, Janell Moran, Karen Fritschle and Bev Puhalla.

Again, this is a free club. I2E meets the 2nd Tuesday of every month at 5:30pm at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Kimmel Education & Research Center, 5985 G Road in Nebraska City, NE.

If you would like to be involved with or participate in the Inventors, Investors and Entrepreneurs Club, contact Connie Reimers-Hild at 402-873-3166 or e-mail: creimers2@unl.edu or contact Chuck Whitney at the EDGE office, 402-245-2105 or email: director@fallscityedge.com.

State News - Nebraska Recognized a National Economic Development Leader

Heineman's leadership, pro-business stance highly praised in corporate real estate executive publication

LINCOLN, NEB. (January 22, 2008)— Governor Dave Heineman and the State of Nebraska Department of Economic Development earned a top slot in the January 2008 issue of Industrial Asset Management Council's (IAMC) monthly newsletter emailed to hundreds of corporate real estate executives. The Governor's commitment to successful economic development landed front and center in IAMC Executive Director Ron Starner's column.

Starner not only sang the praises of the Governor, but invited Michael Rareshide, executive vice president of Partners National Real Estate Group Inc., in Dallas, to share his thoughts about Nebraska, and share he did.

Rareshide, who consults for Fortune 500 companies, held up Nebraska as one of two top locations in the country for corporate expansion projects.

"Both states not only have reasonable wage rates and great incentives, but the real estate portfolio of both existing buildings and land sites does provide the user solid opportunities to pursue," Rareshide said. "While it can be argued that all of the Central Plains states are pro-business, these two states do take it up a notch for several reasons."

Reasons listed were:

"Very knowledgeable economic development officials that truly understand and anticipate what the site selector requires."

"Both states' EDC's are an excellent extension of my site selection consulting."

"Very quick response time to any questions or concerns—no matter how minute or technical—about their state."

"Keen perspective on the strengths of their communities, based upon direct discussions with all the prior local and state employers that have expanded or relocated."

"Great understanding of how to circumnavigate the local, county and state government matrix to help solve the intricate nature of facility relocation."

All this praise is humbling, yet there's no denying it also is music to the Governor's ears, and to his Director of Economic Development Richard Baier.

"This national attention is monumental for our business retention, expansion and relocation efforts, and comes at an excellent time with the Governor's continued commitment to economic development laid out in his State of the State address and through his recent announcement proposing the Nebraska Super Advantage. It is testament that all the hard work and efforts that the State invested in enacting the Nebraska Advantage program 22 months ago is reaping substantial exposure for the state. Not only are we seeing significant numbers of company expansions and relocations, but our many economic development Advantages are being recognized on a national stage," Baier said.

FALLS CITY NEBRASKA

Strategically Positioned. Building for the Future.

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Falls City Tigers & Falls City Sacred Heart

Falls City EDGE would like recognize all the outstanding students and staff in our schools...
you are positive forces that help contribute to this community
and you give us another reason to boast about living in Falls City.

In the EDGE Office,

Chuck Whitney is your Executive Director. Chuck is a native of Falls City and strives to help EDGE and Falls City succeed in all aspects. Chuck is thankful to be back in this humble, yet powerful, corner of Nebraska.

Recently, Katina "Kat" Sample has been brought on as a full-time staff member to assist with the efforts and accomplishments of EDGE.

Both, Chuck Whitney and Katina Sample, have moved to Falls City after being away, from the area, for more than 20 years. Chuck and his wife Bev relocated to Falls City in 2007. Katina and her husband Larry and their three children moved to Falls City in 2006.

Excited and eager to keep Falls City moving in the right direction, Your EDGE Office is building for the future. As an EDGE Member, you have a right to ask questions and to be informed and we encourage you to do so.