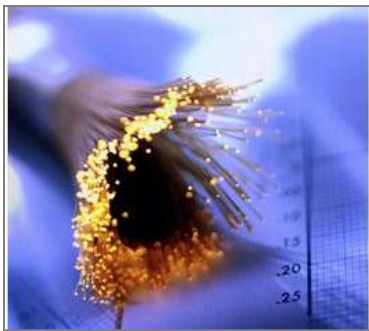




Our mission is to encourage economic development and growth and improve the business conditions of the Falls City area.

Fiber Optic Project Making Progress



“The Fiber-to-the- Home Network will connect all homes and businesses in Falls City to fiber optic cable.”

Beth Sickel, Vice President & General Manager, Southeast Nebraska Communications and EDGE President

Progress is continuing on Southeast Nebraska Communication’s Fiber-to-the-Home (FTTH) network. The \$8 to \$10 million dollar state-of-the-art telecommunications technology will carry digital voice, internet and video services to virtually every home and business in Falls City. FTTH offers so much bandwidth capacity that growth in data demand for the next decades will be covered.

Southeast Nebraska Communications’ Vice President and General Manager and EDGE President Beth Sickel reports “Workers have completed about 55 percent of the process of burying the cable in the ground and about 10 percent of our customers are connected to the network. By the end of the year, we plan to have 95 percent of the fiber buried and 55 percent of our customers connected.”

“This next generation technology strategically positions Falls City for future growth and development,” said

Steve Kottich, EDGE Vice President of Marketing and Sales. “EDGE is working to get the word out that Falls City is *wired for the future*—a smart location for businesses and work-at-home professionals that require the connectedness of an urban area, but desire a more competitive cost location, as well as a great small town quality of living.”

The Falls City EDGE sales team now has a new sales tool in its toolbox to attract telecommunications-driven businesses and workers to the area. The Nebraska Teleworker Job Creation Act (LB1081) signed into law in April grants qualified Nebraska company’s tax credits for offering teleworker jobs to Nebraskans in eligible areas, including Richardson County/Falls City. Under the bill, companies could qualify for reimbursement for training expenses of up to \$300 dollars per worker. [Learn more about this exciting new Nebraska incentive »](#)

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EDGE Seeks Funding for Development of Dual Rail Site

EDGE has submitted a pre-application for a Community Development Block Grant through the Nebraska Department of Economic Development (NEDED) to assist in the site analysis and master site development of a dual rail-served industrial park. The opportunity evolved from ongoing discussions EDGE officials have had with the railroads serving the area, including the Union Pacific (UPRR) and BNSF, and the NEDED. Letters of support were provided by both railroads.

In UPRR’s letter of support, Cheryl Schow, Regional Manager-Industrial Development, stated, “Such a park would provide property and space for new and expanding businesses which generate jobs. The parks facilitate rail as a viable transportation solution for businesses via direct warehouse service or transload options. The rail-served industrial park in Falls City could be a great asset to the community and may bring new freight transport opportunities to the area.”



Preliminary site plan for proposed Falls City dual rail-served industrial park

EDGE has met with landowners to garner support and has engaged Olsson and Associates to develop a preliminary site plan.

NEDED will announce five selected projects to submit a full planning application in August.

Herzog Expanding Falls City Operations

Herzog purchased 60 acres of land more than a year ago and is in the process of adding more than 3.5 miles of additional rail trackage on site to provide for increased capacity and aid in the overall logistics of its Falls City rail car repair facility.

Herzog has increased their hourly workforce by an additional 21 employees since the beginning of 2010 and will likely be adding an additional 4 to 6 in the coming weeks. The facility now also operates two full shifts and both shifts are working 9 hour days.

[Visit Herzog’s website to learn more about the company and its Falls City operations »](#)



Herzog adding more than 3.5 miles of rail trackage to increase capacity at Falls City rail car repair facility

Operation Lifesaver Train Stops in Falls City



Falls City Middle School students board Operation Lifesaver train

Union Pacific brought the Operation Lifesaver train to Falls City and other communities in Southeast Nebraska in April as part of an education effort aimed at reducing the number of deaths and injuries at railroad crossings and railroad rights-of-ways. Approximately 500 Falls City adults and children, including Falls City Middle School students shown in the photo, boarded the train for a trip to Stella, NE and back to Falls City.



Click on the logo to learn more about the Operation Lifesaver Program in Nebraska.

Positive Manufacturing Job Growth

In the first half of 2010, 45 new jobs were added in the manufacturing sector and 1 in the health services sector in the Falls City area. Manufacturers are reporting a positive outlook for job growth in the future:

- Ames True Temper is bringing back to Falls City their axe and wedge production, hiring 5 new people and continues to actively hire.
- Vantec, Inc. has been fortunate to gain a number of new domestic and international customers recently, including Dover Corporation—a multibillion, diversified, global manufacturing and provider of highly engineered, value-added industrial and commercial end markets and Australian-based Atlantis Water Management—an international provider of water management solutions.
- Watkins Air Support Products' (WASP) reports they have received several significant orders/contracts recently. The company is also doing work for local/regional businesses, including Airlanco in Falls City and KSI Conveyors in Sabetha (KS). WASP's total workforce is up to 33.
- Airlanco brought on eight new employees in the spring. Company officials also report employees broke their safety record last quarter by being accident free for 365 days.
- And, as previously mentioned on page 2, Herzog is expanding its operations in Falls City, adding 21 new employees and has plans to add additional employees in the third quarter. Company officials report business is “very good” and the company is continuing to grow their rail fleet and provide superior products and services to the railroad industry. Last December the Herzog team celebrated numerous safety numbers: 179 days without a first aid injury, 202 days without a recordable injury and 1,318 days without a lost time injury.



Vantec work center



WASP worker putting finishing welds on bag cart for FedEx



Airlanco forming area

“It’s great to hear area manufacturers are growing and adding new employees,” said EDGE Executive Director Beckie Cromer. “EDGE is pleased be of support to business and industry choosing to expand or locate their operations here.”

To learn more about these and other Falls City manufacturers and assistance programs available to growing businesses, visit the EDGE website at www.fallscityedge.com.

2010 Nebraska Rankings

- No. 4 – Top States for Volunteering (*Corporation for National & Community Service* – June 2010)
- No. 9 – “Top Overall Growth Performer” Most Enterprise-Friendly States (*U.S. Chamber of Commerce & National Chamber Foundation* – May 2010)
- No. 3 – Pro-Business Climate (*U.S. Chamber Institute for Legal Reform* – April 2010)
- No. 3 – Fiscal Fitness (*Forbes* – March 2010)
- No. 4 – Top Wind Potential States (*National Renewable Energy Laboratory* – February 2010)
- No. 3 – Economic Confidence 2009 (*Gallup* – February 2010)

Peru State College President Visits Falls City

EDGE, in cooperation with the Falls City Area Chamber of Commerce/Main Street, hosted [Peru State College President Dr. Dan Hanson](#) and his wife Elaine on a visit to Falls City in late June.

During the luncheon and tour of the community, President and Mrs. Hanson heard from leaders of the host organizations about Falls City’s recent industrial expansions/developments, Main Street/Downtown revitalization efforts and quality of living and educational facilities improvements. The tour included a visit to the new \$21 million state-of-the-art Community Medical Center that opened last fall.

Leaders also discussed the importance of building strong ties with the area’s educational service providers, including Peru State College. “Aligning economic development and educational programs and initiatives to grow an innovative and well-educated, prepared workforce is crucial to our success,” said EDGE President Beth Sickel. “We were pleased to have this opportunity to share with Dr. Hanson our economic growth strategy and successes and hope it will lead to future collaborations with the College to stimulate continued economic growth and development in Falls City/Richardson County.”



Dr. and Mrs. Hanson tour Community Medical Center (left to right): Linda Santo, CMC Mktg. & Events Coordinator; Elanie Hanson; Peru State College President Dr. Dan Hanson; Beth Sickel, EDGE Pres.; Beckie Cromer, EDGE Exec. Director

Dr. Hanson commended Falls City leaders, “I am very impressed with your progressive vision and accomplishments. I look forward to working with you in the future to build upon your successes in generating new investments and jobs for the area.”

Design Work Completed for 10.1 Acre Expansion of Falls City Industrial Park



The conceptual design for the 10.1 acre expansion of the Falls City Industrial Park has been finalized. The plan is designed to be flexible and includes development of a 40,000 sq. ft. expandable building. The mass grading and utility design allows for the potential of a green area and retention pond in order to meet [LEED Certification requirements](#).

[For more information on Falls City available properties, visit the EDGE website »](#) [For confidential site selection assistance, contact EDGE Executive Director Beckie Cromer.](#)

EDGE Prospect Activity Up

The EDGE staff made over 100 sales calls on targeted businesses in the second quarter, continuing to fill the marketing-sales pipeline with qualified business contacts for ongoing marketing-communications and resulting in one active project (client with specific location criteria and interest in Falls City). This year to date, the EDGE staff has responded to seven new projects—preparing detailed prospect proposal for businesses interested in expanding in Richardson County/Falls City.



Cromer Attends WINDPOWER 2010



NE WINDPOWER Exhibit (left to right): Mary Plettner, NPPD; Toni Tauber, Knox Co.; Shannon Landauer, Boone Co; and Beckie Cromer, EDGE

WINDPOWER 2010 brought together some 20,000 attendees in Dallas, TX, in late May. With nearly 1,400 companies from 48 states and 22 countries exhibiting the latest in wind power technology over an area the size of six football fields, WINDPOWER has established itself as the largest energy trade show in America and the world's largest wind energy conference.

Twenty people represented Nebraska at the conference, including those from the NE Department of Economic Development, NE Public Power District (NPPD), Omaha Public Power District (OPPD) and the cities of Falls City/Richardson County, Albion, Center, Hastings, Holdrege, Laurel, North Platte, Ogallala, South Sioux City, Superior, Wayne and York. EDGE Executive Director Beckie Cromer represented Falls City/Richardson County.

“It was a great opportunity to exchange information about the competitive advantages of doing business in Falls City/Richardson County and the State,” said Cromer. “Working the booth and the floor, we were able meet with a broad spectrum of businesses. It will take time to develop promising leads—but we hope to attract new wind energy investments/jobs to the area.”

Earlier this year EDGE was one of the sponsors in the State's participation at the 2010 BIO International Convention in Chicago—the world's largest annual meeting of biotechnology executives. Later this year, Cromer will be part of the sales team representing Nebraska at Solar Power International 2010 in Los Angeles—the largest solar power conference and expo in North America.

Flat Water Wind LLC Starts Construction

Flat Water Wind LLC of Austin, TX, has contracted with RES-Americas of Boulder, CO, to construct the wind farm. Preliminary construction activities have started and turbine deliveries and erection are expected in the late fall. The wind farm is expected to be operational by the end of the year. A public ground breaking ceremony is being planned for mid-summer—details will be forthcoming.

“We understand the wind farm project is exciting news for Falls City/Richardson County and the State and we are just as excited to become a corporate citizen of the area,” noted Don Dison, V.P. of Engineering and Construction, Gallop Power.

The project size is 60 mega-watts consisting of 40 General Electric 1.5 MW wind turbine generators. Power will be purchased by OPPD under a power purchase agreement. The project is situated entirely in Richardson County, NE.



Preliminary construction work starting on wind farm

Governor Signs Wind Energy Bill

Several bills were signed into law to boost economic development in Nebraska, including LB1048—the Wind Energy Bill designed to encourage the development, ownership and operation of renewable energy facilities for the export of wind energy from Nebraska, and preserves the benefits Nebraskans receive as a result of the state's unique public power system by allowing the Nebraska Power Review Board to approve wind energy operations designed to export energy.



Gov. Heineman signing LB1048

EDGE Business & Industry Appreciation Week

In May during National Business & Industry Week, the EDGE team was busy delivering cookie trays to area businesses in a show of appreciation for the outstanding contributions they are making to the health of the local economy.

“Business & Industry Week provides us with an opportune time to reach out and thank our local businesses for the investment they have made in our community and for the jobs they have created for area residents,” said Beckie Cromer, EDGE Executive Director.”

Similar events are also held throughout the year for other employers in the community, including the healthcare and education sectors, during respective national appreciation weeks.

[Visit the EDGE website to learn more about Falls City’s leading employers »](#)



EDGE Executive Director Beckie Cromer delivers cookie tray to Southeast Nebraska Communications during Business & Industry Appreciation Week

Vision Inn Motel Expansion Completed

In May a large group of community leaders and citizens gathered for the ribbon cutting ceremony and a tour of the newly-expanded Vision Inn Motel.



Vision Inn Motel ribbon cutting ceremony

Eleven local investors invested nearly \$1 million dollars in the redevelopment of the motel. It was noted during the ribbon cutting event that more than 90 percent of the materials and labor used to build and furnish the motel were purchased locally. The facility includes 17 rooms and features a large family suite, a breakfast area and picnic area.

Beckie Cromer, EDGE Executive Director, attended the event and noted the motel is the first project in Falls City to utilize tax increment financing (TIF). She read a congratulatory letter from State Senator Lavon Heidemann who was unable to attend the ribbon cutting event.

Falls City Mayor Rod Vandenberg also congratulated and thanked the owners of the motel for the investment in Falls City. The Mayor noted there are currently three other projects in the planning stages in Falls City that are looking at utilizing this funding tool.

EDGE Sponsors Social Media Workshop



Twenty local businesses and young entrepreneurs participated in social media workshop

EDGE, in collaboration with the Falls City Chamber of Commerce/Main Street and the University of Nebraska-Richardson County Extension Office, sponsored a social media workshop for local businesses and entrepreneurs in June. Twenty individuals participated in the workshop to learn how to utilize social media tools and technology applications, including Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Skype, blogging and others, to market their business.

EDGE Welcomes New Member Investors

The Investor and Community Relations Committee recently completed a “Supporter Level” (\$499-\$100) investment drive. It was a very successful campaign and EDGE welcomes the following new member investors:

Brad and Sandy Catlin	Michael Prosser
Fred and Gracie Deckinger	William and Susan Sipple
Marty and Gail Froeschl	John and Pat Steinman
Richard and Nancy Moses	Dan and Janet Wittwer
William Niedfeldt	Ken and Joan Zoeller

Also joining the EDGE team this year at the “Advocate Level” (\$999-\$500) is Physical and Respiratory Therapy Services, LLC (Dave Nachtigal).

“The broad-based community support EDGE receives is greatly appreciated and demonstrates the spirit of public-private cooperation that is fueling economic growth and development in Falls City/Richardson County,” said Bart Keller, Vice President-Investor and Community Relations. [For a complete list of member investors, visit the EDGE website »](#)

Stay connected with EDGE on Facebook and LinkedIn:



EDGE Invests in Main Street Program

EDGE has invested \$10,000 in the [Falls City Main Street Program](#)—complementing other local private and public investors in the program, including a \$30,000 annual commitment from the City of Falls City.

In June, the Nebraska Department of Economic Development (NEDED) gave the program a boost by awarding the community a \$30,000 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Grant for Phase I-Comprehensive Planning of the downtown revitalization project. Once completed, the community could receive up to \$350,000 for Phase II-Implementation. [Read the NEDED press release »](#)

EDGE member investors Linda Santo of Community Medical Center and Madeline Wilhelm of Farm & City Supply will represent EDGE on the Main Street Board of Directors. “We are pleased to be working in partnership with the Chamber/Main Street groups on a plan of action to revitalize, restore and enhance business development in downtown Falls City,” said EDGE President Beth Sickel.



Falls City's Downtown District

Meet Alicia Wittwer

We are pleased to announce Alicia Wittwer has joined EDGE as Administrative Assistant. Alicia is a life-long resident of Richardson County and recently graduated from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) with a dual degree in Business Administration and Marketing with a minor in Economics.



“This is an exciting opportunity. This position will enable me to utilize my college education as well as give back to my community,” said Wittwer. “I am very much looking forward to working with the EDGE Executive Director, Board and Member Investors to encourage economic growth and development in our area.”

In college Alicia was captain of the UNL Equestrian Team. After her day job at the EDGE office, Alicia heads to Honey Creek Arena where she gives riding lessons to all ages and trains horses for various competitions and events.

You can reach Alicia at the EDGE office or email assistant@fallscityedge.com.

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Beckie Cromer, Executive Director
Alicia Wittwer, Administrative Assistant

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Connect with us



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Bart Keller, Farm and City Supply
Secretary/Treasurer – Beckie Cromer
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