

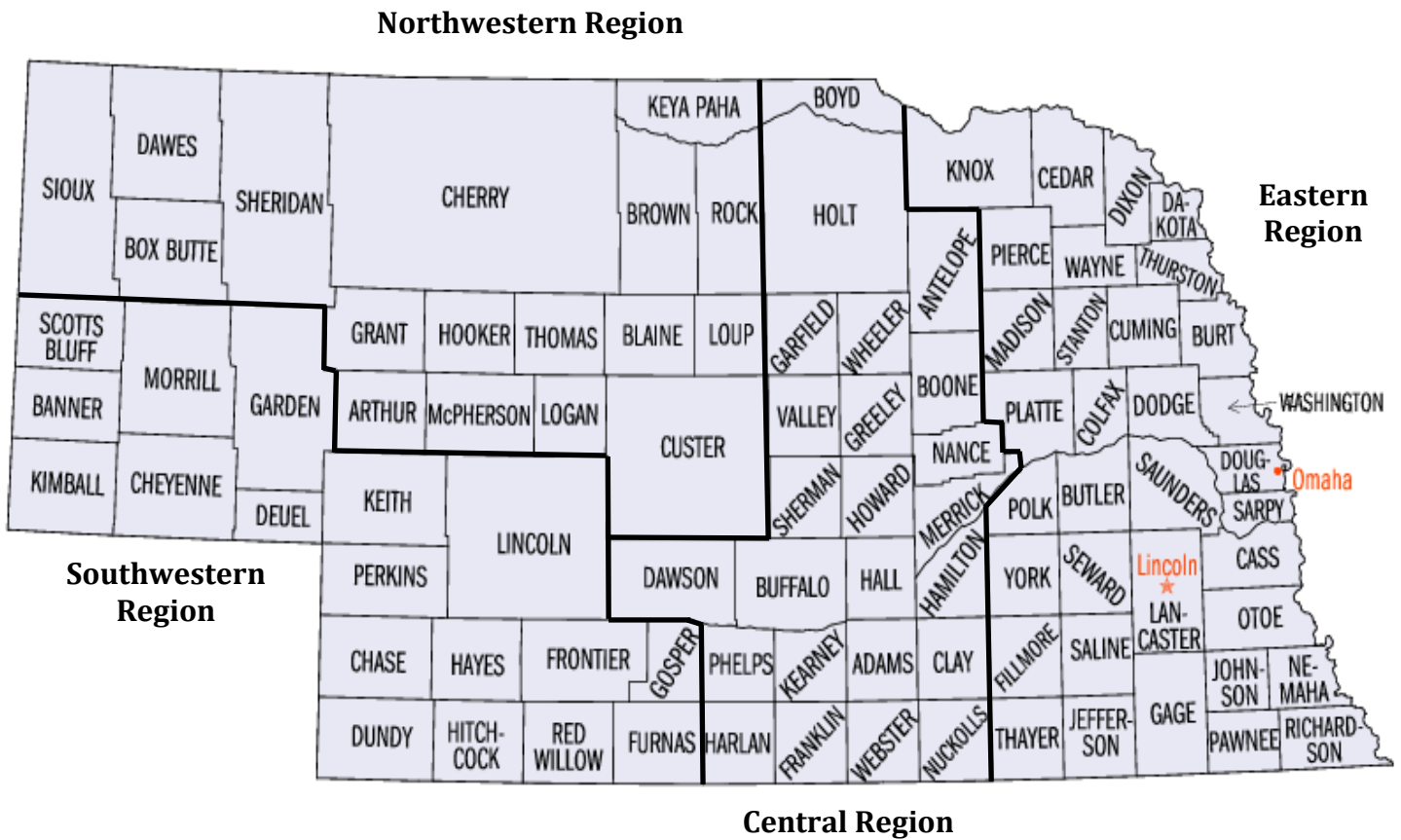
Tourism Development and Marketing Resources Directory

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If you know of additional tourism-related programs, organizations or associations that should be added to this guide, please contact Micheal Collins at micheal.collins@nebraska.gov

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Federal, State, and Local Resources

Americorps

Tel: 202.606.5000, www.americorps.gov

AmeriCorps is a network of national service programs that engage more than 50,000 Americans each year in intensive service to meet critical needs in education, public safety, health, and the environment. AmeriCorps members serve through more than 2,100 nonprofits, public agencies and faith-based organizations. They tutor and mentor youth, build affordable housing, teach computer skills, clean parks and streams, run after-school programs, and help communities respond to disasters.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance

www.cfda.gov

The online Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance gives access to a thorough database of all Federal programs that are available to state and local governments; federally-recognized Indian tribal governments; Territories (and possessions) of the United States; domestic public, quasi-public, and private profit and nonprofit organizations and institutions; specialized groups; and individuals.

Community Development Assistance Act

Nebraska Department of Economic Development, Tel: 800.426.6505, <http://crd.neded.org>

A non-profit community betterment organization may apply to the Nebraska Department of Economic Development to be qualified to award tax credits to eligible contributors. Upon project approval, the organization can award a state tax credit of up to 40 percent of the value of a business, corporation, insurance firm, financial institution, or individual's contribution. Applicants must be a village, city, or county government; or a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization designated by the Internal Revenue Service, and the project service area must be designated by the Department as an area of chronic economic distress. A total of \$350,000 in state tax credits can be allocated each fiscal year by the Department, with no more than \$25,000 in tax credits approved per project.

Community Development Block Grant: Planning

Nebraska Department of Economic Development, Tel: 800.426.6505, <http://crd.neded.org>

Funds are awarded for certain types of planning activities, including:

- Community strategic planning
- Neighborhood, comprehensive, and strategic development plans
- Functional or special studies for housing, infrastructure, economic development, land measures, central business district, energy conservation and transportation
- Historical preservation studies

All project activities must meet one of two national objectives. Document that at least 51 percent of the persons benefiting from the plan are low and moderate-income (LMI) persons, or activities that eliminate specific conditions addressing slum and blight. Maximum grant amounts are \$30,000 for a community/unincorporated county projects, and \$50,000 for multi-community,

countywide, or regional projects. A 25 percent match of the total project activity costs is required.

Community Improvement Financing (Tax Increment Financing)

Nebraska Department of Economic Development, Tel: 800.426.6505, <http://crd.neded.org>

This program is a tool that encourages private development in areas experiencing blight and disinvestments. It provides a method for financing public costs associated with a private development project by using the projected increase in property tax revenue resulting from the private development. CIF bonds allow the developer to retire the “public costs” over a period of 15 years. During the time the bonds are outstanding, each taxing jurisdiction receives its original share of tax revenue or “pre-CIF project tax revenues.”

Any Nebraska community can seek to finance public improvements through CIF as defined by the Nebraska Community Development Law. A local government, or its Community Redevelopment Authority, must first designate the targeted area as blighted, prepare a redevelopment plan, and solicit proposals for its redevelopment. Once an area has been declared blighted and a redevelopment plan has been prepared, the issuance of warrants or CIF bonds to undertake public improvements in the designated CIF area can be done. The projected increase in tax revenues is the difference between the current tax base (revenues) and those that will be collected following the redevelopment. This projected increase in tax revenues is used to pay for the public improvements associated with the project, or is pledged to repay bonds or loans to finance the public improvements.

Community Facilities Loan Program

US Department of Agriculture, Tel: 402.437.5556, www.usda.gov

Community Programs can make and guarantee loans to develop essential community facilities in rural areas and towns of up to 20,000 people. Loans and guarantees are available to public entities such as municipalities, counties, special-purpose districts, non-profit corporations, and tribal governments. Applicants must have the legal authority to borrow and repay loans; pledge security for loans; and construct, operate, and maintain the facilities. They must also be financially sound and able to organize and manage the facility effectively. Loan funds may be used to construct, enlarge, or improve community facilities for health care, public safety, and public services. This can include costs to acquire land needed for a facility, pay necessary professional fees, and purchase equipment required for its operation. Examples of tourism-related projects include museums and outdoor theatres.

Conservation Assessment Program

Heritage Preservation, Tel: 202.233.0800, www.heritagepreservation.org

The Conservation Assessment Program provides a general conservation assessment of a museum’s collection, environmental conditions, and site. Conservation priorities are identified by professionals who spend two days on-site and three days writing a report. The report can help a museum develop strategies for improved collections care and provide a tool for long-range planning and fund-raising. Historic structures (buildings more than 50 years old) can apply for a historic structure assessment. Institutions with living collections (zoos, aquariums, nature centers, botanical gardens, and arboreta) can have a zoologist, botanist, or horticulturalist to assess the collections.

Conservation Reserve Program—Management Access Program

Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, Tel: 402.471.0641, www.outdoornebraska.com

The Nebraska Game & Parks Commission's Conservation Reserve Program-Management Access Program (CRP-MAP) is a unique program to increase the number of public hunting lands while also improving wildlife habitat on CRP lands across the state. It is a hunting access program being offered to landowners who are enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program and have at least two years remaining on their contract. Participating landowners will be paid between \$4.00-\$5.00 per acre for the entire CRP tract for improving wildlife habitat on 10 percent of their CRP land and allowing public walk-in access for hunting and trapping during the hunting season. Landowners whose CRP tracts have been seeded or partially reseeded within the last four years may be eligible to receive \$3 per acre for the entire tract. Any CRP or non-CRP tract with excellent wildlife habitat may be eligible to receive \$1 per acre.

Cornhusker Motor Club Foundation

AAA Nebraska, P.O. Box 3985 Omaha NE 68103

The Cornhusker Motor Club Foundation provides cash donations ranging from \$1,000 to \$20,000.

Downtown Revitalization

Nebraska Department of Economic Development, Tel: 800.426.6505, <http://crd.neded.org>

This program provides for investments in Nebraska communities that will contribute to the revitalization or redevelopment of downtown infrastructure, address health and safety concerns, and develop a capacity for greater growth. Activities will assist communities in carrying out a comprehensive downtown revitalization plan to stabilize and enhance downtown areas that will provide a benefit to low/moderate income residents of the community, or aid in the elimination of substandard or blighted structures or areas in the downtown.

Applicants must meet the following three threshold criteria: (1) be a Nebraska local municipal unit of government with a population less than 20,000; (2) be designated as an Economic Development Certified Community; and (3) have adopted a comprehensive planning, zoning and subdivision ordinances, building codes, code enforcement and a building permit process. The maximum grant amount for Phase I (the planning phase) is \$30,000 per community. The maximum grant amount for Phase II (the project implementation phase) is \$250,000 per community. Each phase requires a 25 percent match.

Farmers Market Promotion Program

U.S. Department of Agriculture, www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/fmpp

The Farmers Market Promotion Program helps to improve and expand domestic farmers' markets, roadside stands, community-supported agriculture programs, agri-tourism activities, and other direct producer-to-consumer market opportunities. The maximum amount awarded for any one proposal cannot exceed \$100,000. Entities eligible to apply include agricultural cooperatives, producer networks, producer associations, local governments, nonprofit corporations, public benefit corporations, economic development corporations, regional farmers' market authorities, and Tribal governments.

Foundation Center

Tel: 212.620.4230, www.fdncenter.org

The Foundation Center is the leading source of information about philanthropy worldwide, and through data, analysis, and training, connects people to the resources they need to succeed. It maintains a comprehensive database of the nearly 100,000 foundations, corporate donors, and grant making public charities in the U.S., and its Foundation Directory Online subscription service is a popular means for searching these databases. The center also operates research, education, and training programs designed to advance knowledge of philanthropy at every level.

Grants.gov

www.grants.gov

This website is the single access point to let organizations locate and apply for more than 1,000 competitive grant programs offered by the 26 federal grant making agencies.

Heritage Nebraska

www.heritagenebraska.org

Heritage Nebraska is a staffed statewide preservation organization responsible for advocacy, education, outreach, preservation, and stewardship to the state's historical structures.

Land and Water Conservation Fund

Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, Tel: 402.471.5424, www.ngpc.state.ne.us

The Land and Water Conservation Fund is a federal assistance program administered by the National Park Service at the federal level. Nebraska Game & Parks Commission administers the fund at the state level through its Division of State Parks. By state statute, 60 percent of the funds are passed through to local political subdivisions in the form of 50 percent reimbursement grants for the acquisition, development, and/or renovation of public outdoor recreation sites and facilities. Funds can be used for a variety of outdoor recreation opportunities such as, picnic shelters, play equipment, ball fields, tennis courts, trails, swimming pools, and campgrounds.

Local Civic, Cultural and Convention Center Financing Act

Nebraska Tourism Division, Tel: 877.632.7275, www.visitnebraska.gov

This act helps finance the construction of new local civic, cultural and convention centers, and the renovation and expansion of existing centers throughout Nebraska. Preferred projects are those that attract new cultural, civic or convention activity to Nebraska from outside the state. Evaluations of grant applications are based on a project's potential for long-term positive impacts on the local and regional economies, attraction impact, readiness, and financial support. The municipality must own and operate the center for which grant assistance is sought. Minimum grant amount is \$20,000 and cannot be more than 50 percent of the total project cost. At least 80 percent of the local match must be cash. The maximum grant amount varies according to the population size of a municipality.

Local Option Municipal Economic Development Act (LB840)

Nebraska Department of Economic Development, Tel: 800.426.6505, www.neded.org

LB840 allows Nebraska municipalities to appropriate and spend local sales and property tax revenues for economic development purposes. A community economic development plan is

required that outlines specific development objectives and the means to raise revenues to fund the projects. The local government must pass a resolution that formally adopts the plan for placement on the ballot, and an election is held for residents to vote on the ballot issue (development plan and funding mechanism). If the ballot is successful, a five-to-10 member citizen advisory committee is convened to govern provisions within the plan, prepare budgets, and report to the local government on its findings and recommendations.

For cities with a population of 2,500 or greater, a qualifying business is any corporation, partnership, limited liability company, or sole proprietorship that derives its principal source of income from any of the following: manufacturing; research and development; processing, storage, transport or sale of goods or commodities that are sold or traded through interstate commerce; sale of services in interstate commerce; telecommunications; tourism-related activities; and headquarter facilities for a corporation involved in activities outlined above. For cities with populations of 2,500 to 10,000, retail is also a qualifying business.

Lodging Tax

See Nebraska Visitors' Development Act

Municipal Infrastructure Redevelopment Fund

Nebraska Department of Economic Development, Tel: 800.426.6505, www.neded.org

The purpose of this fund is to construct or renovate public facilities. A fund is created for each Nebraska municipality within the Nebraska State Treasurer's Office, and these funds are dispersed to local governments semi-annually. Eligible activities include convention and tourism facilities; redevelopment projects; solid waste facilities; wastewater, storm water, and water treatment systems; water distribution facilities and water resources projects; hazardous waste disposal systems; resource recovery systems; airports; port facilities; buildings and capital equipment used for government; mass transit and transportation systems; and parking facilities.

Museum Assessment Program

American Association of Museums, Tel: 202.289.1818, www.aam-us.org

The Museum Assessment Program helps museums maintain and improve operations through a confidential consultative process that provides guidance to prioritize goals, allocate resources wisely, document needs to make a stronger case when seeking grants, and provide recommendations on ways to become a stronger institution. Assessment costs vary based upon a museum's annual budget.

Museums for America

Institute of Museum and Library Services, Tel: 202.653.8536, www.ims.gov

Museums for America is the Institute of Museum and Library Service's largest grant program for museums and supports projects and activities that build museums' capacity to serve their communities. These grants strengthen a museum's ability to serve the public more effectively by supporting high-priority activities that advance the institution's mission and strategic goals. Grants are designed to be flexible with funds used for a variety of projects, including ongoing museum activities, research, planning and programming, purchase of equipment or services, and activities to upgrade and integrate new technologies. Grants are awarded in the following categories:

- “Engaging Communities” supports projects that represent a range of educational activities through which museums share collections, content, and knowledge to support learning
- “Building Institutional Capacity” supports projects that improve the infrastructure of museums to better serve their communities
- “Collections Stewardship” supports projects that maintain and improve the management of museum collections in order to fulfill a museum’s public service mission

National Endowment for the Arts

Tel: 202.682.5400, www.arts.gov

The National Endowment for the Arts is an independent agency of the federal government and over the years has awarded more than \$4 billion to support artistic excellence, creativity, and innovation for the benefit of individuals and communities. The NEA extends its work through partnerships with state arts agencies, local leaders, other federal agencies, and the philanthropic sector.

National Endowment for the Humanities

Tel: 800.634.1121, www.neh.gov

The National Endowment for the Humanities is an independent federal agency and one of the largest funders of humanities programs in the United States. The Endowment provides grants for high-quality humanities projects in four funding areas: preserving and providing access to cultural resources, education, research, and public programs. Grants typically go to cultural institutions, such as museums, archives, libraries, colleges, universities, public television, and radio stations, and to individual scholars.

National Historical Publications and Records Commission

Tel: 866.272.6272, www.archives.gov

The National Historical Publications and Records Commission is a federal agency that makes grants for the preservation and publication of historically important manuscripts and archives. Eligible projects include those that collect, preserve, edit and/or publish the papers of outstanding persons or other significant historical documents relating to U.S. history. Grants can be made to state and local agencies, non-profit organizations, colleges and universities, and individuals.

National Leadership Grants for Museums

Institute of Museum and Library Services, Tel: 202.653.4657, www.imls.gov

National Leadership Grants support projects that have the potential to elevate museum, archival, and library practice within the context of national strategic initiatives. The Institute seeks to advance the ability of museums, archives, and libraries to preserve culture, heritage, and knowledge; contribute to building technology infrastructures and information technology services; and provide 21st century knowledge and skills to current and future generations in support of a world-class workforce. Successful proposals will have national impact and generate results (new tools, research, models, services, practices, or alliances) that can be widely adapted or replicated to extend the benefit of federal investment and that increase community access and participation.

The Institute funds projects with the following characteristics:

National Impact: Proposals should address key needs and challenges that face libraries, archives, and museums. They should expand the boundaries within which libraries, archives, and museums operate; show the potential for far-reaching impact; influence practice throughout the museum, archival, and/or library communities; and show support of current strategic initiatives in these fields.

Innovation: Proposals should demonstrate a thorough understanding of current practice and knowledge about the project area, and show how the project will advance the state of the art of museum, archival, and library service. Innovative projects can implement a new or significantly improved product, process, or program, or a new organizational strategy in museum, archival, and/or library service and practice.

Collaboration: While partners are not required in all National Leadership Grant categories, the Institute has found that involving carefully chosen partners with complementary competencies and resources can create powerful synergies that extend project impact. Proposals should show understanding of the challenges of collaboration and propose means for addressing them.

National Recreational Trails Program

Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, Tel: 402.471.0641, www.ngpc.state.ne.us

This program provides funds for recreational trails development. It reimburses political subdivisions up to 80 percent of the project costs for trail acquisition, development, major renovations, and support facilities. The minimum grant request must exceed \$20,000 and cannot exceed \$150,000 unless a waiver is requested. Any federal agency, community, village, county government, natural resources district, public power district, or school district may apply for funding in Nebraska. Non-profits are not allowed to be project sponsors. Activities associated with trail development such as land acquisition, construction of trails, development of trailhead facilities, equipment to maintain trails, and major renovation projects are eligible.

National Trails Fund

American Hiking Society, Tel: 800.972.8608, www.americanhiking.org/our-work/national-trails-fund

The American Hiking Society's National Trails Fund is the only privately supported national grants program providing funding to grassroots organizations working toward establishing, protecting and maintaining foot trails in America. The fund's grants give local organizations the resources to secure access, volunteers, tools, and materials to protect the nation's hiking trails. Awards range from \$500 to \$5,000 per project.

National Trust for Historic Preservation

Tel: 202.588.6000, www.nationaltrust.org

National Trust Preservation Funds provide two types of assistance to nonprofit organizations and public agencies: (1) matching grants from \$500 to \$5,000 for preservation planning and educational efforts, and (2) intervention funds for preservation emergencies. Matching grant funds may be used to obtain professional expertise in areas such as architecture, archeology, engineering, preservation planning, land-use planning, fund raising, organizational development and law, and to provide preservation education activities to educate the public. Other funds within the National Trust include the Johanna Favrot Fund for Historic Preservation, the Cynthia

Woods Mitchell Fund for Historic Interiors, the Partners in the Field Challenge Grant for Statewide and Local Partners, and the Peter H. Brink Leadership Fund.

Nebraska Arts Council

Contact: Nebraska Arts Council, Tel: 402.595.2122, www.nebraskaartscouncil.org

The Nebraska Arts Council's mission is to promote, cultivate, and sustain the arts for the people of Nebraska by:

- Building creative and proactive leadership in the arts
- Forging partnerships that create and expand opportunities for the arts
- Cultivate new resources needed to sustain the arts in Nebraska
- Establish the arts as basic to education and lifelong learning
- Using the arts as a catalyst for understanding among cultures
- Advocating for increased awareness and access to the arts

Grants fall into the following categories:

- Individual Artist Residency Grants
- Arts Access Project Grants
- Arts Project Grants
- Basic Support Grants
- Individual Artist Fellowship Awards
- Mini Grants
- Nebraska Touring Program Sponsor Grants
- Professional Development Grants
- School Bus Arts Grants
- School Partnership Project Grants
- Statewide Arts Education Initiatives

Nebraska Business Development Center

Tel: 402.554.2521, <http://nbdc.unomaha.edu/home.cfm>

Nebraska Business Development Center consultants provide consulting, training, and mentoring to Nebraska-based businesses. Consultants can help businesses locate possible financing sources; however, the center does not loan money. Under certain circumstances, the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), an agency of the Federal government, will guarantee a percentage of business loans for qualified small businesses. The guarantee is between the SBA and a bank or other lending institution. Some services relating to starting a business in Nebraska are provided to the client at no cost, such as people who want to start or improve a for-profit, Nebraska-based business. Fees for other consulting services such as market research, IT, and management consulting are negotiated between the center and client.

Nebraska EDGE

Center for Applied Rural Innovation, Tel: 402.472.1772, <http://nebraskaedge.unl.edu>

The Nebraska EDGE (Enhancing, Developing and Growing Entrepreneurs) is part of the Center for Applied Rural Innovation at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. It is a community-based

entrepreneurial training program designed to encourage the expansion of small businesses and has helped thousands of individuals transform their visionary ideas into viable business opportunities. The results have been new business start-ups, business expansions, and local community and economic development. Nebraska EDGE's mission is to promote community and economic growth through small business and management training.

The EDGE program offers business development training to help individuals polish their skills, expand their knowledge, and discover how to handle real-world conditions that impact their businesses. Each course provides opportunities for one-on-one advice from instructors, as well as a chance to solicit fresh ideas from a group of fellow entrepreneurs. During an EDGE training course participants will learn how to:

- Determine the feasibility of starting or expanding a business
- Structure a successful business that aligns with personal ideals and aspirations
- Research the industry, set pricing, and distribute the product or service
- Develop marketing strategies that reach customers
- Understand the terms used by lenders and legal advisors
- Efficiently manage operations, such as finances/cash flow, legal issues, and employees
- Craft a detailed business plan to use as a road map for business management

Nebraska Environmental Trust

Tel: 402.471.1714, www.environmentaltrust.org

The Nebraska Environmental Trust's mission is to conserve, enhance, and restore Nebraska's natural environments through projects that connect public and private partners to implement high-quality, cost-effective projects. It values projects that leverage private investment in conservation and emphasize long-lasting results. There are no restrictions on applicants or project sponsors as long as the project falls within the eligibility criteria. Eligibility criteria are listed in the "Standards of Evaluation" section of the application. Individuals, private organizations, and public entities are welcome to apply. Private, for-profit organizations must demonstrate that the project results in public benefit. No maximum grant amount is established. The Trust's Recognition Grant is a simplified application form for requests of \$15,000 or less. The Trust encourages the use of matching funds; however, a match is not required. The Trust is unlikely to fund 100% of a project.

Nebraska Foundation Databook and CD

www.foundationdatabook.com/Pages/ne/ne1.html

The *Nebraska Foundation DataBook and CD* is a directory and CD of Nebraska foundations. It includes comprehensive profiles of the largest grant making foundations and a categorical listing of grants awarded to nonprofit organizations for the most recent year on record.

Nebraska Horse Council

Tel: 308.379.3368, www.nebraskahorsecouncil.org

The Nebraska Horse Council offers grants to charitable/non-profit equine related organizations in Nebraska. Grants are given as "seed money" to inspire new projects, capital improvements, or

for the expansion of existing projects or services. Maximum grant award is \$4,000 and a 50 percent match is required.

Nebraska Humanities Council

Tel: 402.474.2131, www.nebraskahumanities.org

The mission of the Nebraska Humanities Council (NHC) is “to cultivate an understanding of our history and culture.” The council’s purpose is to “enhance the quality of life in communities across our state through programs that study the human race, its achievements, its creations, its dreams and aspirations, its failure and triumphs.” Applications must demonstrate that the humanities are central to the project. The National Endowment for the Humanities has defined the humanities as including, but not limited to, history, literature, languages, jurisprudence, philosophy, comparative religion, archaeology, ethics, social sciences that employ humanistic perspectives, and the history, theory, and criticism of the arts. The three grant programs offered include:

- Mini Grants: \$1,500 or less
- Major Grants: more than \$1,500
- Media (Film/Radio/Television) and Web site/Digital projects are treated as major grants but they have additional requirements and must be submitted at an earlier deadline.

Nebraska Main Street Program

Heritage Nebraska, www.heritagenebraska.org

This program is a network of communities across the state linked together through a preservation-based strategy for rebuilding the places and strengthening the businesses that make sustainable, vibrant, and unique communities. Through affiliation with the National Trust’s Main Street Center, Nebraska Main Street communities tap into the collective wisdom and experience of more than 1,500 communities in 43 state, regional, and urban programs.

Nebraska Pickle Card/Lottery Act

Nebraska Department of Revenue, Tel: 402.471.5729, www.revenue.state.ne.us

The Nebraska Pickle Card/Lottery Act seeks to enhance the social and economic welfare of Nebraskans by raising revenues through the sale of pickle cards for expressed activities defined by the act. A licensed pickle card organization can use its net revenues collected through the act for charitable, human, religious, philanthropic, youth sports, educational, civic, or fraternal activities. State fraternal and religious organizations and fire and rescue departments have exclusively used the act. However, a few nonprofit organizations have sought to raise funds through the sale of pickle cards to underwrite recreational, educational, historic preservation and sporting activities. Examples of licensed pickle card organizations include Nebraska Golf Hall Of Fame Inc., Hastings Museum Foundation and Florence Historical Foundation.

Nebraska Tourism Marketing Grants

Nebraska Tourism Division, Tel: 877.632.7275, www.visitnebraska.gov

These grants from the Nebraska Tourism Division can be used for marketing efforts aimed at increasing tourism revenues for the state. The grants come in three categories:

- Promotion of a new event or expansion of an existing event

- Promotion of a region
- General marketing

Grants are made on a reimbursement basis and applicants must demonstrate that projects will attract visitors from at least 100 miles away. Qualified applicants include nonprofit organizations, governmental entities, and for-profit businesses. Applicants must have federal I.D. numbers to qualify for funding. Eligible activities include development of promotional and marketing materials, trade and sport show attendance, Web site development, and event promotion. Ineligible activities include equipment rental, telephone expenses, postage, membership dues, talent/dignitaries' honorariums, salaries, physical construction of billboards (however, rental space on billboards is covered), items for resale, and reprinting an existing brochure. The minimum grant amount is \$2,000, the maximum is \$10,000, and a 25 percent local match is required.

Nebraska Visitors' Development Act (Lodging Tax)

Nebraska Tourism Division, Tel: 877.632.7275, www.visitnebraska.org

This act allows Nebraska's counties to adopt and collect lodging taxes to promote attractions and visitor services and/or expand and improve attractions. Any county can adopt a lodging tax by first adopting a resolution to implement the tax. Next, they establish a visitors committee and deposit revenues in one or both of two funds: County Visitors Promotion Fund County Visitors Improvement Fund. The visitors committee consists of five or seven persons to oversee the use of these tax revenues. One or two members of the Visitors Committee should be from the lodging industry in a five-person committee, and two or three members in a seven-person committee.

Lodging tax revenues in the County Visitors Promotion Fund can generally support marketing, advertising and promotional efforts. Lodging tax revenues in the County Visitors Improvement Fund typically are used for making grants for expanding and improving attractions owned by the public or any non-profit organization. The lodging tax can be collected at rates of up to four percent on the rental of sleeping accommodations at hotels, motels, campgrounds, bed and breakfast establishments, and similar lodging facilities.

Preservation Tax Incentive for Historic Buildings

Nebraska State Historical Society, Tel: 800.833.6747, www.nebraskahsitory.org

This program offers tax credits and favorable tax treatments for historic buildings rehabilitated for income-producing purposes. The historic preservation tax incentives promote the reuse of historic buildings and stimulate private investment in older areas. The Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office promotes these incentives by providing assistance to property owners in qualifying projects. Current federal law establishes a tax credit for the rehabilitation of historic buildings for commercial, industrial, and rental residential purposes. Developers who rehabilitate historic buildings can claim a percentage of the qualified rehabilitation costs in the form of a federal income tax credit.

Red Carpet Service

Tel: 308.632.1234, 308.865.8263, http://ruralinitiative.nebraska.edu/tools/red_carpet.html

Red Carpet Service is an education program that helps front line employees and professionals discover the tools to promote tourism, practice skills to identify and respond to travelers' needs, and promote the community in a positive way. It combines the basics of traditional customer service training while highlighting the unique needs of travelers and tourists. Participants who complete the training are "Red Carpet Service Certified."

Benefits of the program include:

- Increased understanding of the contributions tourists make to the local economy
- Renewed appreciation for the important role of front line professionals
- Improved customer service skills
- Increased knowledge of local attractions and hidden treasures
- Continued availability of a "ready-to-use" program that includes: teaching outlines, handouts and teaching tools initially customized for the community, Power Point presentations for each session, post-, pre- and mystery shopper evaluation forms and promotion materials

There also is an online version of the program with eight learning modules, each which can be completed in about 15-30 minutes. Modules are self-paced. Participants can stop and then return at any time, completing one or more modules at a time. Learners complete the program at their own pace any time during the subscriptions year.

Research Grants

Nebraska State Historical Society, Tel: 402.471.3270, www.nebraskahistory.org

The Nebraska State Historical Society annually awards up to three \$1,000 research grants to support the work of scholars conducting research on some aspect of Nebraska history or archeology. The grants are awarded to support research into primary sources and interpretive writing related to the history of Nebraska and the Great Plains.

Rural Business Enterprise Grants

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Tel: 402.437.5556, www.usda.gov

The U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development Office provides grant funding to finance the development of small business enterprises in rural communities with populations less than 50,000. Any incorporated city, village, county, township, district, state government non-profit organization, or federally recognized American Indian tribe in rural areas is eligible. Grant funds can be used for acquisition and development of land; construction of buildings, plants, equipment; access streets and roads; parking areas; utility and service extensions; refinancing, fees; technical assistance; and start-up operating costs and working capital.

Rural Enterprise Assistance Project

Center for Rural Affairs, Tel: 402.687.2100, www.cfra.org/reap/default.htm

The Rural Enterprise Assistance Project (REAP) offers business management training and modest credit assistance for all types of small businesses, such as start-up and established, home-based and store front, full-time and part-time, and farm or town-based businesses.

Seniors Corps

Tel: 202.606.5000, www.seniorcorps.gov

Senior Corps connects people over the age of 55 with individuals and organizations that need their job skills and expertise with community projects and organizations. The RSVP Program connects volunteers with service opportunities in their communities that match their skills and availability.

Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE)

Tel: 800.634.0245, www.score.org

SCORE is an extensive, national network of experienced entrepreneurs, corporate managers, and executives who provide free and confidential business counseling and advice to businesses in all stages of development.

Small Business Administration 504 Loan Program

Nebraska Economic Development Corporation, Tel: 402.483.4600, www.nedcoloans.org

The SBA 504 Loan Program assists small business owners looking to expand their business through the purchase of commercial real estate or capital equipment. The Nebraska Economic Development Corporation works in conjunction with lenders (typically a bank) to provide up to 90% financing for commercial property purchases and construction. Permitted uses of 504 loans include:

- Acquisition of vacant land for construction of a building
- Acquisition of land and building
- Leasehold improvements
- Renovation, construction, and addition to building
- Acquisition of heavy duty machinery & equipment (such as printing press)
- Associated soft costs, such as title searches and insurance, attorney fees, appraisals, environmental reports, architects, permits, surveys, installation of machinery, points on bridge loans, and limited number of furniture and fixtures

Smithsonian Institution Travel Exhibition Service (SITES)

Smithsonian Institution, Tel: 202.633.3140, www.sites.si.edu

SITES is one of the four National Programs of the Smithsonian Institution. The program develops and travels an extensive range of exhibitions about art, science, history, and popular culture. SITES creates engaging, three-dimensional exhibitions about a diverse number of topics, using artifacts, photographic images, and interpretive materials. For venues that present an exhibition, SITES provides educational resources, publications, public relations support, technical guidelines, and insurance. Venues include museums, libraries, science centers, historical societies, community centers, botanical gardens, zoos, schools, shopping malls, and airports.

Smithsonian Community Grant Program

Smithsonian Institution, Tel: 202.633.3140, www.sites.si.edu

Under this program, eligible SITES exhibitors may apply for up to \$5,000 for expenses related to public and educational programming produced in conjunction with a SITES exhibit. Exhibitors

may choose to enhance current program offerings or to create a new program especially suited to the topic of the exhibition.

State Wildlife Grants Program

Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, Tel: 402.471.0641, www.outdoornebraska.ne.gov

This program addresses the needs of declining fish and wildlife and prevents future endangered species listings. The US Fish & Wildlife Service distributes funding to state wildlife agencies using a formula based on population and land area. State Wildlife Grant funds are used in each state to implement their Wildlife Action Plan. The Nebraska Game & Parks Commission makes a portion of its annual allocation available to partners through a competitive grants program and has awarded funds to conservation partners and universities to conserve at-risk species and their habitats.

Tax Increment Financing

See Community Improvement Financing

Tourism Assessment Program

Nebraska Tourism Division, Tel: 877.632.7275, www.visitnebraska.gov

This program assists Nebraska's rural communities to realize their opportunities, celebrate their strengths, improve their weaknesses, and ensure they are reaching their tourism potential. The process starts the organization of a committee made up of people from various backgrounds, including lodging properties, restaurants, downtown shops and other stores, local historians, event planners, and volunteers, that completes a thorough evaluation of their community's past and present tourism efforts and issues. This evaluation is sent to the program coordinator who schedules a community visit and writes a detailed report that includes the combined thoughts and suggestions of the tourism assessment team. Part One offers a brief description of the program, while Part Two reviews the community and lists a series of short- and long-term tourism development and marketing strategies. The report concludes with an extensive listing of tourism marketing and development resources.

Tourism Cares (Worldwide Grant Program)

Tel: 781.821.5990, www.tourismcares.org

Tourism Cares' mission is to preserve the travel experience for future generations through grants for conservation, preservation and restoration of global natural, cultural, and historic sites through the Worldwide Grant Program. Primary consideration is given to projects and programs with the following goals:

- Capital ("brick-and-mortar") improvements that serve to protect, restore or conserve sites of exceptional cultural, historic, or natural significance
- The education of local host communities and the traveling public about conservation and preservation of sites with exceptional cultural, historical, or natural significance.

Tourism Database

<http://web1.msue.msu.edu/msue/imp/modtd/mastertd.html>

The National Tourism Database is a partnership between Michigan State University Extension and the National Tourism Education Design Team. The purpose of the database is to provide a comprehensive inventory of Extension resource materials related to tourism education and to make this information conveniently available.

Tourism Development Grant

Nebraska Tourism Division, Tel: 877.632.7275, www.visitnebraska.gov

Tourism Development (TD) grants fund physical tourism development projects, such as new tourism attractions or physical improvements to existing ones. Planning, programming, marketing, advertising, and related activities are excluded. The objective is to assist projects that have attracted significant financial support and are likely to have long-term positive impacts. For-profit and non-profit attractions are eligible for assistance. Any city, village or county in Nebraska (excluding Omaha and Lincoln) must be the official applicants for project assistance. Thus, each application must have a project owner/operator (the entity actively pursuing the development project) and an applicant (the county, city or village that will administer the CDBG funds).

Eligible projects are tourism attractions (for-profit or nonprofit, public or private) that are expected to annually draw 2,500 or more visits from origins of at least 100 miles away because of their scenic, historic, cultural, scientific and/or recreational attributes. Examples of eligible attractions are: historic restorations, museums, participatory sports facilities, and convention centers. Examples of ineligible businesses are those that more often serve as: tourism-support facilities, such as eating and drinking places, commercial sleeping accommodations, gasoline service stations, and gift shops. TD grants are evaluated by the Nebraska Department of Economic Development. The minimum grant amount is \$20,000 and the maximum grant amount is \$300,000.

Tourist Oriented Directional Signing

Nebraska Logos, Inc., Tel: 800.333.6467, www.interstatelogos.com

The Tourist Oriented Directional Signing (TODS) program directs travelers to tourism-related businesses, services, and activities. TODS signs are placed on the right-of-way of rural highways, and are owned and maintained by a contracted agent of the Nebraska Department of Roads. Examples of TODS signs include recreational, historical, cultural, educational, entertainment, or unique commercial and nonprofit activities. To qualify, the tourist-oriented activity (a business, service or similar activity) must derive the majority of its income or visitors during the normal business season from motorists not residing within the immediate area. It must be open to the public during the normal season of the activity at least eight hours per day, five days per week. The business week must include a Saturday or a Sunday.

Transportation Enhancement Program

Nebraska Department of Roads, Tel: 402.479.4881, www.dor.state.ne.us

This program provides funding to local, regional, and state government entities to construct and restore transportation facilities that are ineligible for funding through other programs. Examples of eligible projects include trails, development of scenic byways, restoration of historic transportation facilities, and other projects directly related to the historic, current or future

transportation infrastructure. Projects must fall into one or more of the following activities related to surface transportation to be eligible for grant funds:

- Facilities for pedestrians and bicycles
- Safety and education activities for pedestrians and bicyclists
- Acquisition of scenic easements and scenic or historic sites
- Scenic or historic highway programs (including tourist and welcome center facilities)
- Landscaping and other scenic beautification
- Historic preservation
- Rehabilitation of historic transportation buildings, structures or facilities (including historic railroad facilities)
- Preservation of abandoned railway corridors (including conversion and use as pedestrian/bicycle trails)
- Control and removal of outdoor advertising
- Archaeological planning and research
- Environmental mitigation to address water pollution due to highway runoff, or to reduce vehicle caused wildlife mortality while maintaining habitat connectivity
- Establishment of transportation museums

Wetlands Reserve Program

Natural Resources Conservation Service, www.ne.nrcs.usda.gov/programs

The Wetlands Reserve Program is a voluntary program offering landowners financial and technical assistance to restore, protect, and enhance wetlands and associated uplands through permanent easements, 30-year easements, and long-term restoration agreements. The program is designed to achieve maximum wetland functions and values while obtaining optimum wildlife habitat. The landowner retains complete control of access to the land. However, the National Resources Conservation Service retains access rights for the purposes of carrying out restoration, management, and monitoring activities on easement lands.

Eligible lands include wetlands cleared or drained for farming, pasture, or timber production; certain adjacent lands that contribute significantly to wetland functions and values; previously restored wetlands that need long-term protection; upland areas needed to provide an adequate buffer or that contribute to creating a manageable boundary; drained wooded wetlands; existing or restorable riparian habitat corridors that connect protected wetlands; and certain lands substantially altered by flooding. The land must be restorable and be suitable for providing wildlife benefits.

WILD Nebraska

Nebraska Game & Parks Commission, Tel: 402.471.0641, www.outdoornebraska.ne.gov

WILD Nebraska is an umbrella program of the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission that primarily delivers wildlife habitat management activities on private lands.

Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program

Natural Resources Conservation Service, Tel: 402.437.4111, www.ne.nrcs.usda.gov/programs

The Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program is a voluntary program that encourages creation of high quality wildlife habitats that support wildlife populations of national, state, tribal, and local significance. The Natural Resources Conservation Service provides technical and financial assistance to landowners and others to develop and protect upland, wetland, riparian, and aquatic habitat areas on their property. Participating landowners are not required to give public access to land developed or protected under this program. Eligible lands include privately owned land, federal land when the primary benefit is on private or tribal land, state and local government land on a limited basis, and tribal land.

Foundations

American Express Philanthropic Program

www.americanexpress.com/corp/philanthropy

The foundation's philanthropic activities focus on community service, economic independence, and cultural programs. The Cultural Heritage program protects the natural and built environment for enjoyment of current residents and visitors and for preservation for future generations. Funding supports art and culture unique to countries and regions. Cultural heritage grant making emphasizes the following: public awareness of the importance of historic and environmental preservation; preservation and management of major tourism sites, direct support for important cultural institutions and major projects in the visual and performing arts that are representative of national, regional and local cultures; and access to the arts and assistance to organizations in developing new audiences. No application form is required. Initial approach should be by letter or proposal.

AT&T Foundation

Tel: 303.298.6559, www.att.com/foundation

The foundation seeks projects that meet society's needs and relate to AT&T's technological solutions. Awards grants in education, civic and community service, and arts and culture. Focus is on cities and regions with large concentrations of AT&T employees and business operations, with the majority of funds supporting US-based institutions. The Arts and Culture Program supports innovative artistic projects by nationally and internationally recognized arts and cultural institutions. Applicants submit a letter of introduction and description of the organization/project. If the organization/project is national in scope applicants should apply directly to the AT&T Foundation. If organization and its activities are local in scope, applicant should contact AT&T's regional office.

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

Tel: 202.857.0166, www.nfwf.org

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's mission is to preserve and restore native wildlife species and habitats across the country. Grants are awarded in three broad areas: Keystone Initiative Grants, Charter Grant Programs and Ventures.

Nebraska Community Foundation

Tel: 402.323.7330, www.nebcommfound.org

Headquartered in Lincoln, the Nebraska Community Foundation is a nonprofit, charitable organization that provides financial management, strategic development, and education/training services to communities, organizations, and donors throughout Nebraska. The foundation provides affiliated fund status (allowing communities or organizations to achieve nonprofit charitable status without forming their own nonprofit corporation) and strategic development assistance in hundreds of communities throughout the state.

Peter Kiewit Foundation

Tel: 402.344.7890, www.peterkiewitfoundation.org

The Peter Kiewit Foundation provides funding in the areas of the arts, education, children and families, community development, and health and human services. The foundation offers three programs: General Purpose Grants, Small Grants, and Initiatives.

Organizations and Associations

Many of the organizations and associations listed below do not offer financial assistance; however, they are valuable resources for technical assistance, networking, and other forms of information.

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation

www.achp.gov

Ag Marketing Resource Center

www.agmrc.org

America's Byways Resource Center

www.byways.org

American Association of Museums

www.aam-us.org

American Bed and Breakfast Association

www.abba.com

American Bus Association

www.buses.org

American Birding Association

www.americanbirding.org

American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works

<http://aic.stanford.edu>

American Recreation Coalition

www.funoutdoors.com

Americans for the Arts

www.artsusa.org

Association for Living History, Farms and Agricultural Museums

www.alhfam.org

Association of Children's Museums

www.childrensmuseums.org

Bank Travel

www.banktravel.com

Bed and Breakfast Inns Online

www.bbonline.com

Center for Rural Affairs

www.cfra.org

Central Nebraska Economic Development District

www.cnedd.org

Conservation Fund

www.conservationfund.org

Council on Foundations

www.cof.org

**Destination Marketing Association
International**

www.destinationmarketing.org

Ducks Unlimited

www.ducks.org

Federal Grants Wire

www.federalgrantswire.com

GROW Nebraska

www.growneb.com

Heritage Nebraska

www.heritagenebraska.org

Heritage Preservation

www.heritagepreservation.org

Institute of Museum and Library Services

www.ims.gov

International Motorcoach Group, Inc.

www.imgcoach.com

Invest Nebraska Corporation

www.investnebraska.com

Land Trust Alliance

www.lta.org

Learn and Serve America

www.learnandserve.gov

Lincoln Highway Association

<http://lincolnhighwayassoc.org/ne>

Midwest Travel Writers Association

www.mtwa.org

National Assembly of State Arts Agencies

www.nasaa-arts.org

**National Association of Recreation
Resource Planners**

www.narrp.org

National Business Incubation Association

www.nbia.org

National Forest Recreation Association

www.nfra.org

National Park Service

www.nps.gov

National Recreation and Park Association

www.nrpa.org

National Tour Association

www.ntaonline.com

Nature Conservancy, The

www.nature.org

**Nebraska Association of Convention &
Visitors Bureaus**

www.meetinnebraska.com

**Nebraska Association of Resources
Districts**

www.nrdnet.org

Nebraska Arts Council

www.nebraskaartscouncil.org

**Nebraska Association of Bed &
Breakfasts**

www.nebraskabb.com

Nebraska Bird Partnership

www.nebraskabirds.org

Nebraska Broadcasters Association

www.ne-ba.org

Nebraska Chamber of Commerce and Industry
www.nechamber.com

Nebraska Commission on Indian Affairs
www.indianaffairs.state.ne.us

Nebraska Department of Economic Development (NDED)
www.neded.org

Nebraska Department of Roads
www.dor.state.ne.us

Nebraska Enterprise Fund
www.nebbiz.org

Nebraska Film Office
www.filmnebraska.org

Nebraska Game and Parks Commission
<http://outdoornebraska.ne.gov>

Nebraska Governor's Office
www.state.ne.us

Nebraska Grant Writers
<http://assist.neded.org/nebgrant.html>

Nebraska Highway 6 Association
www.route6tour.com/nebraska.htm

Nebraska Highway 14 Association
www.highway14.org

Nebraska Hotel & Motel Association
www.nebraskahma.com

Nebraska Humanities Council
www.nebraskahumanities.org

Nebraska Investment Finance Authority
www.nifa.org

Nebraska Latino American Commission
<http://latinoac.nebraska.gov>

Nebraska Legislative Council
www.unicam.state.ne.us

Nebraska Library Commission
www.nlc.state.ne.us

Nebraska Lied Main Street Program
www.heritagenebraska.org

Nebraska Logos Inc.
www.interstatelogos.com

Nebraska Museums Association
www.nebraskamuseums.org

Nebraska Off-Highway Vehicle Association
www.nohva.com

Nebraska Press Association
www.nebpress.com

Nebraska Restaurant Association
www.nebraska-dining.org

Nebraska State Historical Society
www.nebraskahistory.org

Nebraska Trails Council
<http://nebraskatrails.org>

Nebraska Travel Association
www.nebraskatravelassociation.com

Nebraska Tourism Division
www.VisitNebraska.gov

Nebraska Veterans Memorial Highway 83 Association
www.veteransmemorialhighway83.com

Nebraska Winery & Grape Growers Association
www.nebraskawines.com

Northeast Nebraska Economic District
www.nenedd.org

Northeast Nebraska Travel Council
www.travelnenebraska.com

Ontario Motor Coach Association
www.omca.com

Panhandle Area Development District
www.nepadd.com

Pan-American Highway Association
www.panamericanhighway.org

Partnership for the National Trails System
www.pnts.org

Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center
www.pedbikeinfo.org

Pheasants Forever
www.pheasantsforever.org

Plains Humanities Alliance
<http://plainshumanities.unl.edu>

Preserve America
www.preserveamerica.gov

Preservation Action
www.preservationaction.org

Preservation Directory
www.preservationdirectory.com

President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities
www.pcah.gov

Rails to Trails Conservancy
www.railtrails.org

Resource Conservation and Development Offices
www.ne.nrcs.usda.gov

Snitily Carr
www.SnitilyCarr.com

Society of American Travel Writers
Tel: 414.908.4949
www.satw.org

South Platte United Chambers of Commerce
www.spuccne.com

Southeast Nebraska Development District
www.senddonline.com

Southeast Nebraska Tourism Council
www.visitsoutheastnebraska.org

Travel and Tourism Research Association
www.ttra.com

Travel Industry Association of America
www.ustravel.org

Trust for Public Land
www.tpl.org

United State Tour Operators Association
www.ustoa.com

University of Minnesota Tourism Center
www.tourism.umn.edu

University of Nebraska Rural Initiative
<http://ruralinitiative.nebraska.edu>

United States Department of Agriculture
www.nrcs.usda.gov

Unites State Tour Operators Association
www.ustoa.com

Western Nebraska Tourism Coalition
www.westnebraska.com

West Central Nebraska Devt. District
www.wcndd.org