

NEBRASKA MUNICIPAL REVIEW

Official Publication of the League of Nebraska Municipalities

Inside view

York celebrates anniversary of
iconic water tower

2023 Annual Conference recap

Battle Creek transforms park as part of
150th anniversary celebration

OCTOBER 2023



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Workers continue to fashion the colorful hot air balloon which will be dedicated during Yorkfest in September, which



York Public Works employee Dave Becker opened up the valve in the base of the water tower, which is the new 750,000 gallon water tower. Also, the outside flood lights should be activated for the first time today. The city also Monday took out the commission the old 150,000 gallon water tower on 10th and 11th Avenue. Public Works Director Orville Davidson is meeting today with representatives of the City of Missouri to finalize plans for the old tower, built in 1912.



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OCTOBER 2023

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The York water tower and its hot air balloon paint job is a very well-known icon for travelers along I-80. Image of the tower shared courtesy of York County Visitors Bureau. Article clippings and photos beneath are shared courtesy of the York News-Times and digitization of articles provided by David Crawford of Policoro Consulting.

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Looking for the recent Directory updates?

Good news! A list of changes can now be found on the League website! Visit: LONM.org/news

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Diane Becker	Communications/Marketing Director
Kyla Brockevolt	Executive Administrative Assistant
Drew Cook	Customer Service Specialist
James Kelley	Loss Control Specialist
Fred Wiebelhaus	Loss Control/Claims Manager

CALENDAR

NLC City Summit.....	Nov. 15-18, 2023, Atlanta, Georgia
Utilities/Public Works Section Annual Conference	Jan. 10-12, 2024, Embassy Suites, Lincoln
Midwinter Conference.....	Feb. 26-27, 2024, Cornhusker Marriott, Lincoln

Municipal Legal Calendar

(All statute citations to Revised Statutes of Nebraska)

DECEMBER 2023

CITIES OF THE FIRST CLASS

Each month	Clerk publishes ordinances passed within 15 days after passage. (16-405)
Within 10 days from meeting or before next meeting (whichever is sooner)	Clerk to have minutes available for public inspection. (84-1413)
Within 30 days from Council meeting.....	Clerk publishes official proceedings of meetings. (19-1102)
Within 20 days after the end of the month.....	Treasurer files monthly financial report. (16-318)
* *	Clerk must prepare agenda prior to next Council meeting. (84-1411)
By December 31	Clerk files year-end certification of street superintendent with the Nebraska Department of Transportation
Reminder.....	Notice of automatic renewal of liquor and beer other than Class C licenses must be published between January 10 and January 30 of each year. (53-135.01)
Reminder.....	On or before January 31 provide county assessor each new lease or changed preexisting lease which went into effect during the previous year and a listing of previously reported leases that are still in effect. (77-202.11)
Reminder.....	On or before January 31, each municipality with a clean energy assessment district (PACE) submits report to Urban Affairs Committee. (13-3211)

CITIES OF THE SECOND CLASS AND VILLAGES

Each month	Clerk publishes ordinances passed within 15 days after passage (17-613)
Within 10 days from meeting or, before next meeting (whichever is sooner)	Clerk to have minutes available for public inspection. (84-1413)
Within 30 days from Governing Board meeting.....	Clerk publishes official proceedings of meeting. (19-1102)
Within 20 days after the end of the month.....	Treasurer files monthly financial report. (17-606)
* *	Clerk must prepare agenda prior to next Council or Board meeting. (84-1411)
By December 31	Clerk files year-end certification of street superintendent with the Nebraska Department of Transportation
Reminder.....	Notice of automatic renewal of liquor and beer other than Class C licenses must be published between January 10 and January 30 of each year. (53-135.01)
Reminder.....	On or before January 31 provide county assessor each new lease or changed preexisting lease which went into effect during the previous year and a listing of previously reported leases that are still in effect. (77-202.11)
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Rod Storm, former Blair City Administrator, honored for his decades of dedicated leadership to the League and City of Blair

BY L. LYNN REX, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, LNM

Rod Storm recently retired after 33 years of exceptional service as the City Administrator of Blair! As an extraordinary servant leader and mentor to his colleagues and others, Rod's accomplishments are second to none!

On Sept. 28, **League President Deb VanMatre**, Mayor of Gibbon, recognized and honored Rod Storm for his decades of dedicated leadership and commitment to the League and the City of Blair. During the Thursday Luncheon of the League Annual Conference, President VanMatre presented him the **League Community Builder Award**, which was last given to Skip Edwards, the former Mayor of Fremont, on Feb. 27, 2012. Rod's name will be inscribed on the plaque listing the recipients of the Community Builder Award in the League office. In addition, President VanMatre also gave him an inscribed crystal clock as a token of our appreciation for the extraordinary amount of TIME he devoted to the League.

Rod was elected to serve on the League Executive Board from 2015-2018, representing city managers/administrators across the state. As Blair City Administrator, Rod represented Blair on the **League Larger Cities Legislative Committee**. Throughout the years, he also was actively engaged with the League staff in advocating before the Legislature in favor of numerous bills to assist cities and villages as well as oppose bills detrimental to the interests of member municipalities. Senators appreciated his concise testimony and ability to explain complicated issues!

Rod served on several special League committees and subcommittees, including the League Team recently negotiating with the **League Association of Risk**

Management (LARM). Even before Blair joined LARM, Rod was a strong advocate for LARM and helped lead the effort and support litigation from 2017-2019 to successfully return LARM to a membership driven organization. LARM is the single most important program the League has developed to assist MEMBER CITIES AND VILLAGES.

Rod also played a key role to assure the City of Blair would be a founding member of the **League Insurance Government Health Team (LIGHT)**. LIGHT is the single most important program for EMPLOYEES of member cities and villages to provide coverage for health care in partnership with Blue Cross Blue Shield of Nebraska and Mutual of Omaha.

Although retired, Rod has agreed to continue serving on the **League Building Committee** in a multi-year effort by the League Executive Board to finance and develop plans for a new League Building. The current League Building was constructed in 1939; it has been retrofitted at least twice and cannot be repaired or renovated cost effectively. These are just a few examples of Rod's involvement with the League to help shape our organization to effectively and strategically better serve member cities and villages.

Rod's impressive career in public service is extensive.



Rod Storm

He worked on rural water projects with the natural resources districts in Dakota County and Thurston County and was the City Administrator of Plainview before his appointment as the City Administrator of Blair, a position which he held from August 1989 until 2023 when he retired.

Thanks to **Blair City Clerk Brenda Wheeler** who provided the League a list of some of the key highlights of Rod's many accomplishments, which include:

- Rod's leadership role in a long list of transportation-related projects, especially those involving Highway 75 and the "Near South Bypass" and lobbying the Department of Transportation to make Highway 133 four lanes.
- Updating Blair's Comprehensive Plan three times.
- Downtown renovation, city hall renovation, swimming pool renovation, new facilities for the Fire Department, Library and Police Department.

Rod also played a key role in the establishment of a Drug Task Force, School Liaison Officer, and increasing the police force from 12 to 17 officers.

He was instrumental in the creation of the Blair Airport Authority and legislative bills over the years benefiting municipal airports, including LB 727 in 2023.

Rod has been a leader in a long list of tax increment financing projects and economic development efforts, including repurposing the former "Dana College Campus" and the recruitment and development of the "Cargill Bio Campus."

Rod's legacy of accomplishments also includes the development of parks, sidewalks, trails, and more than 35 new housing subdivisions developed and annexed into city limits. In addition, Rod was instrumental in the development of over 800 new single family housing units and over 200 multi-family housing units in Blair.

These are just **some** of his MANY achievements! However, Rod recently gave



Rod Storm, former City Administrator of Blair, was honored at the League Annual Conference for his decades of service and leadership to the League and City of Blair.



this statement as his most rewarding accomplishment: "Other than the privilege to serve six mayors, numerous Councilmembers and the citizens of Blair, for almost thirty years, I annually hosted, along with the Mayor and City Clerk, the Blair elementary second graders and their dedicated teachers at City Hall to learn about the community and how city laws are made." ■

Something special in the air

BY DR. SUE CRAWFORD
CITY ADMINISTRATOR, CITY OF YORK



YORK CELEBRATES ANNIVERSARY OF ICONIC WATER TOWER

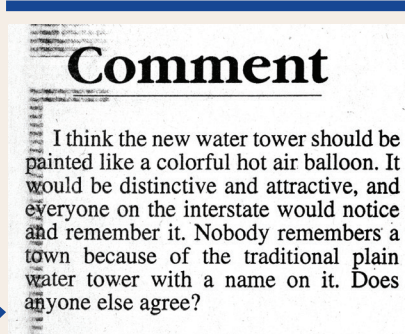
This year marks the 25th anniversary of the York hot air balloon water tower that stands near Interstate 80. What started as an anonymous suggestion to the *York News-Times* comment section turned into a community fundraising event and has become an iconic image for the city.

To mark the anniversary of the occasion and to capture the story for history, the city sponsored video interviews of community members telling stories about their roles in the balloon becoming a reality and what it has meant to their families and the community over the years. For several years, city staff kept a scrapbook of clippings of city stories from the *York News-Times*. The 1998 scrapbook provided a quick way to read the story as it was told in the news coverage at that time. The story has themes consistent with many Nebraska municipality stories shared in this magazine: addressing infrastructure needs, finding creative solutions, raising community support, and building a legacy.

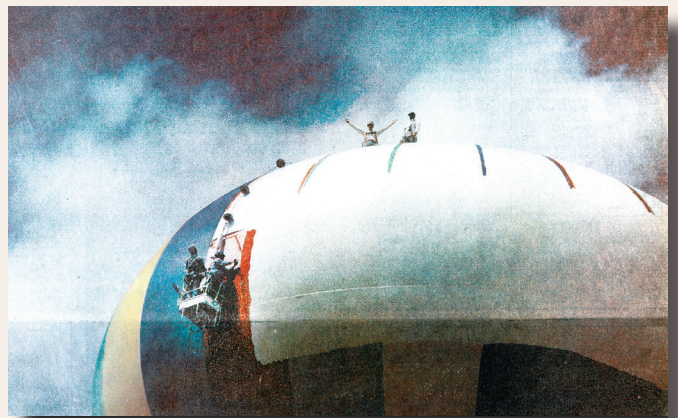
The Idea Blows Up Fast

In 1998, the City of York was in the process of upgrading its water system with a new water tower. The initial plans called for a basic beige and blue design. Then, in mid-February, an anonymous posting in the comment section of the *York News-Times* suggested that the city paint the water tower like a hot air balloon and asked if others agreed.

This question generated conversation in the community.



Snippet from the Feb. 19, 1998, issue of the *York News-Times* - shared courtesy of the *York News-Times* - www.yorknewstimes.com.



Cutline from the May 22, 1998 issue of the *York News-Times* - "Hello, York," says a worker from Chicago Bridge and Iron from atop the water tower where workers continue to fashion the colorful hot air balloon. Photo shared courtesy of the *York News-Times* - www.yorknewstimes.com.

Marty Rousseau, who owned a hotel where balloonists often stayed and who served on the York Visitor's Bureau Committee picked up the idea and ran with it. About two weeks after the comment appeared in the paper, Marty brought the idea to the city council at its first meeting in March. He had taken the idea to the York Visitor's Bureau committee and received an enthusiastic response there. The initial response from the council was not as enthusiastic.

The city council did not approve additional funding to change the previously planned painting design as requested. Speaker Greg Adams, who was the Mayor of

York at the time, offered that the city would consider switching to the hot air balloon design if the additional funds needed could be raised by those supporting the idea. Adams later acknowledged that he was skeptical of the idea and thought that requiring the money to be raised might be the end of the idea. However, when the city administrator commented after the meeting to Rousseau that the money couldn't be raised in York, Adams recalls advising him not to bet against Marty being able to pull it off.

Pull it off he did. By the very next council meeting, about a month from the date of the comment in the *York News-Times*, Rousseau returned to the City Council with a check, a grin, and a celebratory balloon hat to mark the occasion. The change in the paint design was on. The next step involved coming up with the specific balloon water tower design. Orville Davidson, Public Works Director at the time, worked with Rousseau on the design. By the next week, the design was finalized and sent to the painters. By July of that same year, David Becker, a public works employee, had the honor of turning the wheel to activate the water tower.



Cutline from the July 7, 1998 issue of the York News-Times - York Public Works employee Dave Becker opened up the valve in the base of the water tower Monday putting the new 750,000 gallon water tower into service. Also, the outside flood lights should be activated for the first time today. Photo shared courtesy of the York News-Times - www.yorknewstimes.com.



Cutline from the January 23, 1998, issue of the York News-Times - Welders under contract with Chicago Bridge and Iron continue to fire away welding the seams on York's 750,000 gallon water tower. Photo shared courtesy of the York News-Times - www.yorknewstimes.com.

Why a Hot Air Balloon?

Rousseau recalls seeing the water tower being constructed outside of his window of the Yorkshire Hotel and thinking that it looked like a hot air balloon. He noted that balloonists traveling to hot air balloon festivals would often stay at the hotel. News accounts from 1998 credit the *York News-Times* comment with the idea of a hot air balloon. This comment, anonymous at the time, is now credited to Lynn Christiansen.

His daughter notes that his part of the story became a point of pride for Lynn and his family. The grandkids affectionately called it "Grandpa's Kabboon."

Melanie Wilkinson connects the hot air balloon idea with efforts in the city at that time to establish an annual hot air balloon festival. She recalls going out early in the morning for a few years in a row as a young reporter to take pictures of the balloon launch and then returning without a story because year after year, some weather event canceled the launch. The water tower stands as the most successful balloon launch from that period.

The Impact of the Balloon

Opinions remained mixed as the hot air balloon project proceeded. Some were enthusiastic about it. Sally Rueben, who was on the York Visitor's Bureau, recalls enthusiasm from the Visitor's Bureau and recalls thinking that the balloon idea was a fun idea. According to the March 20 account in the *York News-Times*, Council Member Margaret Brink encouraged the council to move forward with the idea saying, "If we don't like the idea in 10 to 15 years we can repaint the darn thing, but in the meantime, let's have some fun." [*York News-Times* March 20, 1998, York Hot Air Balloon to Fly – page 5] Madonna Mogul, currently the director for the Greater York Chamber of Commerce recalls thinking that it would make York look like too much like Worlds of Fun. Mayor Barry Redfern, a relatively new council member at the time, recalls wondering if the balloon was an appropriate image for the city.

As the years have gone by, the hot air balloon water tower has become a reason that people recognize and remember York. Bob Sauter, director of the York County Visitor's

Continued on page 8 / See York

York

Bureau, said that at conferences, people from all over the country talk about recalling the balloon in their travels. In interviews in 2023 Speaker Adams and Mayor Redfern both acknowledge that the iconic water tower design has been good for the city. Mayor Redfern notes seeing what it has become now, after his skepticism at the time, reminds him to stay humble and open-minded to new ideas.

The location of the water tower at a key crossroads adds to the attention that it draws. Millions of vehicles pass the I-80/ Highway 81 interchange each year. People discuss using it as a landmark on trips across the country. People from York talk about seeing the water tower as a sign of home. Ron Mogul, former city council member, poetically dubbed it the chimney rock of I-80.

Saving Local Stories

The 25th year milestone created an incentive to intentionally collect stories related to the water tower. The importance of capturing the stories from people in the community became even more prescient as Lynn Christiansen, a key player in the story, passed away weeks before the interviews began. In the day-to-day busyness of municipal tasks taking time to capture city stories like these can seem unmanageable. In our case, it became manageable through a short-term contract with a videographer and a target of about 10 interviews. The interviews were simple and usually lasted less



Photos from the September 9, 1998, issue of the York News-Times - Steve Wiemer and Annie Redfern, chair and co-chair of Yorkfest '98, show off some of the more interesting merchandise commemorating the 20th anniversary celebration. Photo shared courtesy of the York News-Times - www.yorknewstimes.com.

than an hour. We completed most of the interviews in parts of the afternoons of one week. Our contracted videographer spent the time to turn those interviews into a few story clips for distribution and recordings of the full interviews for our museum archives. A full set of the story clips can be found on the City of York's YouTube channel. ■

Editor's note: A very special thanks to Dr. Sue Crawford and everyone involved in making this story happen. A huge thanks to the *York News-Times* for allowing us access to the archives and thank you to David Crawford of Policoro Consulting for digitization of the images. Interviews used for this story were conducted in collaboration with videographer Callie Hurley (calliehurley.weebly.com). This story is one that means a lot to many people and we are excited to highlight it in the *Nebraska Municipal Review*.

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League of Nebraska Municipalities

2023 ANNUAL CONFERENCE



Matt Lebrman

Impacting change at the local level was a key topic at this year's conference

Municipal officials from across the state gathered together in Lincoln to collaborate, share ideas, network, and learn at the League's Annual Conference held at the Cornhusker Marriott Hotel Sept. 27-29.

There were 188 delegates in attendance, representing 47 municipalities across the state. Sessions covered a wide range of topics—including, but not limited to: affordable housing, addressing conflict in civic government, human trafficking, cybersecurity, Creative Districts, and the strategic use of social media to share municipal information.

Buffalo County Sheriff Neil Miller was presented the League Distinguished Service Award for his leadership, dedication, and advocacy resulting in the passage of LB 1014 and LB 1241 in the 2022 legislative session.

A highlight of the Annual Conference was the delegate luncheon honoring League Past Presidents. Numerous past presidents were in attendance and many memories were recapped at the luncheon. In addition, Rod Storm, former

Continued on page 10 / Conference



Above left: Sue Crawford was among the attendees at the League's Annual Conference held Sept. 27-29 in Lincoln. **Above right:** Board President and Gibbon Mayor, Deb VanMatre addresses attendees at the Annual Business Meeting held on Friday, Sept. 29.





Attendees of the preconference seminar learned about affordable housing resources and what is being done across the state.

Conference

Continued from page 9

City Administrator of Blair was honored for his decades of leadership and commitment to the League and the City of Blair.

At the Annual Business Meeting, the 2023-2024 League Executive Board Officers elected for 3-year terms are Joel H. Bergman, Mayor of St. Paul; Jordan Colwell, Vice Mayor of Scottsbluff; Josh Moenning, Mayor of Norfolk; and Janine K. Schmidt, CMC/Treasurer of Morrill, who was elected as the Clerks Representative.

Gibbon Mayor Deb VanMatre will continue her term as President of the Executive Board, Aurora Mayor Marlin Seeman will remain serving as President-Elect and Nebraska City Mayor Bryan Bequette continues as Vice President. Mayor Paul Lambert of Plattsmouth will remain a member of the board as Immediate Past President.

The following will continue to serve on the League Board of Directors: Jean Stothert, Mayor of Omaha; Leirion Gaylor Baird, Mayor of Lincoln; Julie Deepe, Mayor of Deshler; Catherine Jo Mills, Village Chairperson of Ansley; and Joey Spellerberg, Mayor of Fremont.

Other representatives serving on the board are Jeff Hofaker, City Administrator of Sutton (as the Manager/Administrator representative) and Layne Groseth, City Administrator/Utilities Manager of North Platte (as the Utility Representative). ■



Above and below: Conference attendees enjoyed visiting with the numerous sponsors in between conference sessions.



Former North Platte Mayor and League Board Past President Dwight Livingston and his wife, Ronda, were among conference attendees.



Secretary of State Bob Evnen



George Welch

LEADERSHIP IN ACTION

Sheriff Neil Miller presented with
League Distinguished Service Award

What is the recipe for making change happen? If you ask Buffalo County Sheriff Neil Miller and Scottsbluff Chief of Police and City Manager Kevin Spencer, their answers could vary, but might include a combination of late nights, flexibility, and strong listening skills.

At the Annual Conference, Deb VanMatre, League President and Gibbon Mayor, presented the “League Distinguished Service Award” to Neil Miller, the Sheriff of Buffalo County, for his exceptional leadership, dedication and advocacy resulting in passage of LB 1014 and LB 1241 in the 2022 legislative session. This award also was presented to Chief Spencer at the 2023 League Midwinter Conference but Sheriff Miller was unable to attend. These two men are the first recipients of the award who are not State Senators.

Here is a snippet of President Deb VanMatre’s comments from the ceremony:

LB 1014 and LB 1241 are making transformational improvements in training facilities and laws greatly benefiting law enforcement agencies throughout Nebraska. Former Gov. Ricketts referred to the 2022 session as the “Year for Law Enforcement.” Sheriff Miller and Chief Spencer worked tirelessly



Above: Buffalo County Sheriff Neil Miller; League President and Gibbon Mayor Deb VanMatre and Scottsbluff Chief of Police and City Manager Kevin Spencer pose for a quick picture at the League Annual Conference.

Right: President Deb VanMatre presents Sheriff Miller with the League Distinguished Service Award.



advocating for passage of this landmark legislation which will benefit all of our police departments and law enforcement agencies. They made numerous trips to Lincoln and spent countless hours on Zoom meetings with State Senators, law enforcement agencies, the League, and other stakeholders. Sheriff Miller and Chief Spencer consistently underscored the importance of allocating \$50 million of the State of Nebraska’s “American Rescue Plan” funds to make COVID-related infrastructure improvements to the Nebraska Law Enforcement Training Center in Grand Island.

We are so appreciative that former Governor Ricketts included

Continued on page 19 / Miller



On Friday, the Annual Members' Meeting of the Light Insurance Government Health Team (LIGHT) was held.



Gary Person



Jeff Yost

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- ☐ Nebraska CLASS
- ☐ Nebraska Energy Federal Credit Union
- ☐ Nebraska Public Agency Investment Trust (NPAIT)
- ☐ Nebraska Public Power District
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Village of Taylor among the 13 communities awarded funding as part of “Transportation Alternative Project”

\$50 million in federal grants will improve mobility, provide commuting and recreation options

Thirteen Nebraska communities were named recipients of a combined \$50 million in federal grant awards as part of the 2023 Transportation Alternatives Project (TAP) Federal Grant Program, according to the Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT). This is the largest amount funded in Nebraska since the program’s inception.

Created in 1991, this competitive grant program is administered by the U.S. Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and helps local communities fund a variety of smaller-scale infrastructure projects that support alternate modes of transportation, such as safe routes to school, recreational trails, traffic improvements, and Complete Streets projects. These projects can be both on- and off-road facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other non-motorized forms of transportation.

The 13 TAP grant awardees receiving these funds include:

- Midtown Medical Center Bikeway Connection, City of Omaha

- Fremont FEVR Rail to Trail Project, City of Fremont
- Cowboy Trail Surfacing, Rushville to mile marker 400, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission

- Connecting Fort Calhoun with Safe Transportation Alternatives, City of Fort Calhoun

- Beatrice Homestead Trail Extension – Phase I, City of Beatrice

- Westside Connecting Trail, City of South Sioux City

- Elkhorn River Trail Bridge, Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District

- Grand Island West Connector Trail, City of Grand Island

- Schram Spur N-370 Undercrossing and Trail Segment, City of Papillion

- Winnebago Childcare Trail and Roundabout, Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska


- River Road Connector Trail Project, City of Blair

- Western Douglas County Trail, Douglas County

- Kevin Brown Educators Memorial Trail, Village of Taylor

Want to learn more about alternative & active transportation and how to incorporate it in your municipality?

Check out the column from Bike Walk NE on page 26.



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One of the grant awardees, the Kevin Brown Educators Memorial Trail, will serve the community providing a more diversified economy, while giving visitors an opportunity to enjoy the attractions that the Village of Taylor offers. Tourists can walk or bike through locations where the Sandhills begin and enjoy the flora and wildlife along the North Loup River.

“The TAP Grant Program will have a significant impact on these local communities and their economies, providing the opportunity to highlight their investments in transportation alternatives as well as local projects,” said NDOT Director Vicki Kramer. “NDOT is dedicated to serving our communities, improving mobility, and providing commuting options and recreation for Nebraskans.”

TAP provides roughly \$1.3 billion each year for safety projects throughout the United States TAP is administered as a federal program with its own distinct planning process. To use TAP funds states must follow requirements related to annual reporting and the administration of a competitive process. NDOT issued a Call for Projects earlier this year via an online application form, along with eligibility guidelines and requirements. The federal TAP funds were awarded to eligible projects throughout the state. ■

Source – NE Department of Transportation



The Kevin Brown Educators Memorial Trail will begin at the Taylor Visitors Information Center and highlight a variety of sites around the village, including the Taylor Community Arboretum, rodeo grounds and the well-known, Villagers of Taylor. Photos provided by Richard Brown/Village of Taylor



See more!



Use the QR code to view an overview of the Kevin Brown Educators Memorial Trail project in the Village of Taylor.





Gosper County purchased this grass fire truck with help from USDA Rural Development. Photo provided by USDA RD.

USDA Rural Development:

Resources for Recovery

Disasters can strike anywhere. The silver lining in Nebraska is that you can count on friends and neighbors to turn up to help provide aid, clean up, and lend a helping hand.

USDA Rural Development Nebraska would like you to also consider us a friendly neighbor who can help individuals, communities, Tribes, and businesses recover and rebuild.

For example, after storms struck Pawnee City Nebraska and damaged the water supply system, USDA Rural Development was able to assist the city in accessing disaster funds to install a new generator, amp, and automatic transfer switch to power back up for the water supply system.

We take pride in knowing that we are a part of the work that has been done to make sure that rural Nebraska residents can count on safe and reliable water after a disaster.

We are currently offering several programs to help assist with recovery from 2022 Presidentially declared disasters. Homes or facilities must be located in eligible rural areas with a population of 20,000 or less (35,000 for water and wastewater projects). The communities must be in presidentially declared disaster areas. These counties include Antelope, Boone, Burt, Cedar, Cuming, Custer, Dixon, Frontier, Furnas, Garfield, Greeley, Holt, Knox, Logan, Pierce, Polk, Red Willow, Sherman, Thurston, Valley, Wayne, Wheeler, and York Counties.

Programs include:

Community Facilities Disaster Repair Grant Program:

Funds may be used to repair essential community facilities, replace damaged equipment or vehicles, or purchase new equipment to undertake repairs to damaged facilities.

Community Facilities Technical Assistance and Training Disaster Repair Grant Program:

Funds may be used to assist communities in identifying and planning for community facility needs, identify resources to finance community facility needs, and prepare reports, surveys, and applications.

Water and Waste Disaster Repair Grant Program:

Funds may be used to repair and replace essential water systems, sanitary sewage disposal, sanitary solid waste disposal, and storm water drainage to households and businesses in eligible rural areas.

Rural Disaster Home Repair Grant Program:

Funds may be used by low-income homeowners for disaster related home repair expenses (including costs incurred prior to application). Properties must have sustained damages as a result of a Presidentially Declared Disaster occurring in 2022. The maximum grant amount is \$40,675.

To learn more about any and all of the USDA Rural Development Programs that might be of value to your community, visit our website at rd.usda.gov/ne or call our main line at (402) 437-5551.



Resources for Rural Recovery

When a disaster strikes, USDA Rural Development programs can help individuals, communities, Tribes, and businesses recover and rebuild. Below, you'll find several USDA programs that may be of assistance.



NOTE: In a Presidentially-declared disaster, it is to your benefit to register with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA):
Main: 800-621-3362 | TTY: 800-462-7585 | Website: www.DisasterAssistance.gov.

Single Family Housing:

- Home repairs
- Build or purchase a home
- **Contact:** Krista Mettscher, Single Family Housing Program Director, Krista.Mettscher@usda.gov (402) 437-5551

Communities:

- Repair buildings
- Replace equipment and vehicles
- Repair of water / waste systems
- **Contact:** Kelley Messenger, Community Programs Director, Kelley.Messenger@usda.gov, (308) 455-9837

Businesses:

- Real estate and equipment financing
- Working capital
- Energy upgrades
- **Contact:** Bill Sheppard, Business Programs Director, Bill.Sheppard@usda.gov, (402) 371-5350

The following programs are currently available from USDA Rural Development Nebraska:

- **Community Facilities Disaster Repair Grant Program**
- **Community Facilities Technical Assistance and Training Disaster Repair Grant Program**
- **Water and Waste Disaster Repair Grant Program**
- **Rural Disaster Home Repair Grant Program**

Homes or facilities must be located in eligible rural areas with a population of 20,000 or less (35,000 for water projects.)

The communities must be in presidentially declared disaster areas. These counties include Antelope, Boone, Burt, Cedar, Cuming, Custer, Dixon, Frontier, Furnas, Garfield, Greeley, Holt, Knox, Logan, Pierce, Polk, Red Willow, Sherman, Thurston, Valley, Wayne, Wheeler, and York Counties.

Learn more at <https://www.rd.usda.gov/ne>

AVERTING DISASTER

Proactive planning can help protect equipment and pipes from freezing

■ **BY DIANE BECKER**, COMMUNICATIONS/
MARKETING DIRECTOR, LARM ■

In Nebraska, vigilance in protecting equipment and buildings from severe cold is a perennial responsibility. Not being prepared for extreme cold weather can cause disastrous consequences for municipalities, including the possibility of frozen and burst water pipes, stalled vehicles, and gelled diesel fuel lines in emergency equipment. Preparation is the key which means planning and implementing steps that protect equipment and property from the effects of cold weather.



Before the temperatures dip, post a cold weather preparation checklist, so the staff is reminded of all the buildings and equipment that need to be fortified from the cold.

One of the items on the weather to-do checklist should include adding layers

of insulation in the walls of cold-susceptible areas. Don't forget to add additional insulation in the ceiling, especially if overhead pipes may be exposed to the cold.

Consider boarding up unused doors and windows or replacing regularly used ones that are not energy efficient. There may be energy incentives for communities that replace old windows and doors with more modern and energy-efficient ones. If boarding up or replacing the windows isn't practical, place a plastic covering on the inside. It's also possible to caulk or weather strip windows and doors where cold air may be leaking in.

Buildings with water pipes or that store essential equipment susceptible to freezing temperatures should be kept at a temperature of at least 55 degrees. Place thermometers in various rooms in the building, and if the heat does not seem to reach all areas of the building, it may be necessary to raise the thermostat temperature to 65 degrees. Do not place portable heating devices in unattended facilities. Staff that use portable heating devices in



The trees in Clarkson glisten from the ice. Winter in Nebraska can cause issues, but planning ahead and being prepared can help prevent disasters. Photo provided by Diane Becker/LARM.

their offices should be reminded that the heaters should be kept away from anything flammable. There also should be adequate airflow around the devices, and they should be unplugged when no one is in the office.

It's imperative to check on the status of buildings as to whether they are warm enough. Consider installing low-temperature alarms in facilities that can send an alert if the temperature in the building drops unexpectedly. In very cold weather, it's necessary to check buildings more often, including on weekends, evenings, and holidays. It's better to take steps to warm a building up where the temperature has unexpectedly dropped than to deal with equipment that doesn't run or frozen and burst water pipes.

In extremely cold weather, let the water trickle from faucets served by exposed or vulnerable pipes.

Have backup generators at the ready and ensure adequate fuel is available to power them.

Many resources are available to keep buildings and equipment protected from the cold Nebraska winters; however, vigilance is the key to ensuring the cold isn't causing damage. ■

Progressive recycling efforts recognized in Kearney

Congratulations to the Kearney Sanitation Department for being recognized as the 2023 Green Team of the Year from the Nebraska Recycling Council! The team was recognized at the September Kearney City Council meeting.

Nearly 8,000 Kearney homes participate in the curb side recycling program and use recycling drop off points around town. Currently the Kearney Recycling team processes 335 tons of material each month.

In the future, the program is looking to expand and explore green energy options to cut cost and be more progressive for the City of Kearney. ■



From left to right - Haley Nolde, Executive Director of Nebraska Recycling Council; Sarah Sawin, Kearney Assistant Utilities Director; Steve Hart, Sanitation Supervisor; & Shauna Petzold, Household Hazardous Waste Coordinator. Photo provided by City of Kearney

Watch the video from the Awards Ceremony here!



Award

Continued from page 11

\$47.7 million in LB 1014 in his ARP Act budget presented to the Legislature in 2022 to make these needed improvements and transformational changes at the Nebraska Law Enforcement Center.

For example, these improvements include: an indoor weapons training facility, improvements to an outdoor shooting range, land acquisition for an up-to-date and safe vehicle training track, expanded cafeteria and food prep areas and new technology rooms.

Sheriff Miller (then-President of the Nebraska Sheriffs Association) and Chief Spencer (then-President of the Police Chiefs Association of Nebraska) made additional trips to Lincoln throughout the session to meet with Senators and testify at hearings to advocate for passage of historic legislation, including LB 1241 to expedite reciprocity applications of officers from other states to help address increasing vacancies in law enforcement due to several issues, including COVID, elevated caseloads, increased violence and criminal activity.

LB 1241 is helping address the ongoing statewide crisis facing law enforcement agencies on attracting and retaining officers, including applicants certified in other states. Until passage of LB 1241, it was far easier for a Nebraska law enforcement officer to become an officer in another state than it was for a certified officer in another state to become certified in Nebraska. ■



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Decisions impacting local governments

BY AMANDA KARRAS

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, INTERNATIONAL
MUNICIPAL LAWYERS ASSOCIATION

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled on several cases impacting local governments during the 2022-2023 term, from federal elections management to a new test for what is considered “waters of the United States.” The National League of Cities, through partnership with the Local Government Legal Center (LGLC), participated in several amicus briefs supporting local government interests throughout the term.



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SACKETT V. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

The issue in this case was to determine the proper test for assessing whether wetlands are waters of the United States (WOTUS) under the Clean Water Act. Previously, WOTUS has included “wetlands” that are “adjacent” to navigable water.

In their decision, the Court held the Clean Water Act extends only to wetlands that have a “continuous surface connection” with “waters” of the United States. The Court expressly discarded the “significant nexus” test from a previous case as “particularly implausible.”

The Court’s decision now limits the definition of WOTUS and some local infrastructure (such as water supply and treatment, flood control and stormwater management infrastructure) may now be excluded from the definition. Infrastructure that is not itself “waters” is likely excluded from the definition under this new ruling. Local governments will therefore need to await further EPA action as they go back to the drawing board and issue a new rule seeking to define “continuous surface connection.”

TYLER V. HENNEPIN COUNTY

The issue in this case was whether selling a home to satisfy a debt to the government and keeping the surplus value violates the Fifth Amendment’s Takings Clause. Under Minnesota State law, property taxes become a lien against the property once they are assessed and if they are not paid during the year they are due, they become delinquent, at which point a county may obtain a judgment against the property.

In a unanimous decision, the Supreme Court ruled that Hennepin County did violate the Takings Clause of the Fifth Amendment by keeping the surplus equity from selling the homeowners condominium after she failed to pay her property taxes. The violation occurred not with the sale of the property for failure to pay property taxes or when the county kept the

tax debt (including interest and penalties), but rather, because the county kept the surplus equity.

Under this ruling, local governments in states that allow for retention of the excess of a sale will need to ensure they are not keeping any surplus equity after the sale of a forfeited property. Even if the local government itself does not keep the surplus equity, if the former property owner is not able to get the surplus equity back, state and local governments may be liable for a Taking. For example, if a private tax certificate holder is able under state law to retain the surplus equity after paying off the tax debt and interest, the homeowners may still be able to bring a takings claim against the government.

ALLEN V. MILLIGAN

The issue was whether the Alabama Legislature's 2021 redistricting map violated Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act, which prevents election practices or procedures that discriminate based on race. In a 5-4 decision, the Supreme Court affirmed the lower court's decision and found that the Alabama Legislature's maps likely diminished Black voters' rights in the state.

The Court affirmed to bring a successful Section 2 claim, one must meet the preconditions determined in the 1968 *Thornburg v. Gingles* decision:

The minority group must be sufficiently large and [geographically] compact to constitute a majority in a reasonably configured district;

The minority group must be able to show that it is politically cohesive; and

The minority must be able to demonstrate that the white majority votes sufficiently as a bloc to enable it . . . to defeat the minority's preferred candidate.

The Supreme Court found the preconditions were met and therefore demonstrated that the Alabama Legislature likely violated Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act. For local governments, this ruling upholds equitable voting rights and equitable access in local election administration and ensures that congressional representation is reflective of local diversity.

MOORE V. HARPER

The issue in this case was whether a state legislature has the sole authority to regulate federal elections. A key theory in play was the Independent State Legislature Theory (ISLT), which proposes the Constitution delegates authority to regulate federal elections for Senate and House of Representatives within a state to that state's legislature without any checks and balances from state courts. The court rejected the ISLT and held that the Federal Elections Clause "does not insulate state legislatures from the ordinary exercise of state judicial review."

In doing so, the court found that although the U.S. Constitution gives state legislatures authority to regulate federal elections within their jurisdiction, state courts can properly supervise the legislature's exercise of this power.

The U.S. Supreme Court's majority opinion keeps the elections system status quo, avoiding a two-tiered election system, one for federal elections where state legislatures could operate unchecked by state constitutions and state judicial review, and one for state elections where those normal checks are in place. Such a system could have greatly impacted local governments in their role in administering elections from mail in ballots and recounts, polling locations, voter ID requirements and emergency responses. The decision reserved the ability for federal courts to review state court decisions regarding federal elections, including decisions interpreting state law. But the decision did not provide parameters for that review.

Continued on page 22 / See Court




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GROFF V. DEJOY

The issue was to determine what is considered an “undue hardship” under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which rising to that level would excuse an employer from providing a religious accommodation. Previously, courts relied on a standard for “undue hardship” as defined in the *Trans World Airlines, Inc. v. Hardison*’s decision which was defined as “any effort or cost that is ‘more than ...de minimis.’” De minimis refers to a standard meaning too trivial or minor to merit consideration.

In this case, the Supreme Court provided in a unanimous decision that to demonstrate an “undue hardship,” an employer must show “a burden is substantial in the overall context of an employer’s business.” The court sent the case back to the Third Circuit to consider again, under this new

defined standard. While the new opinion changes the standard of “undue hardship” which will likely result in new guidance from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the Court also agreed that “a good deal of the EEOC’s guidance in this area is sensible and will, in all likelihood, be unaffected by [its] clarifying decision.

Given the court’s ruling, all employers, including public employers, will need to immediately review their employment policies and practices regarding religious accommodations. This will require immediate training for managers and human resources employees. Local government employers will need to wait for additional guidance from courts and the EEOC to determine what exactly constitutes “substantial costs.”

303 CREATIVE V. ELENIS

The main issue in this case was whether the creation and sale of a wedding website to the public is considered speech, which would be protected under the First Amendment, or rather commercial activity / conduct that incidentally conveys speech, which would not be protected.

The Supreme Court held that Colorado’s public accommodation law violates the First Amendment’s Free Speech Clause by compelling the speech of a business owner engaged in expressive activity. The potential impacts of this ruling may be broad, as the decision could open the door for any business engaged in expressive activity to refuse to provide services to individuals regardless of antidiscrimination laws that would otherwise protect those individuals. The court has not defined the parameters of expressive activity and that will likely be defined by the lower courts through litigation.

Exceptions to public accommodation laws, as the court has ruled in this case, may prove to be difficult for cities in

their efforts to uphold and/or create local anti-discrimination ordinances. Cities will need to be aware of how public accommodation laws may be impacted by this recent decision in their enforcement of state or local anti-discrimination law as it relates or conflicts with First Amendment rights. ■

About the author:

Amanda Karras is the Executive Director and General Counsel for the International Municipal Lawyers Association (IMLA). NLC, IMLA, and NACo formed the Local Government Legal Center (LGLC) in 2023, a coalition of national, local government organizations to provide education to local governments regarding the Supreme Court.

Source – National League of Cities (NLC)

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Battle Creek transforms park as part of 150th anniversary celebration

■ **BY MARJIE DUCEY**
OMAHA WORLD-HERALD ■

Heritage Park in Battle Creek is coming to life at last. Three historic buildings and the land surrounding them had sat padlocked and abandoned for years until work began there in coordination with the town's 150th anniversary celebration in August.

"Heritage Park was in pretty bad shape," Marcie Sextro said. "It had only been mowed and hadn't had much TLC."

That's all changed in the past year at the park south of town on Nebraska Highway 121, thanks to an organizing group of four and lots of volunteers. Sextro is a part of that group.

The volunteers started renovating a former doctor's office to

use as a heritage museum for the site. Work on the historical Joseph and Katherine Severa Skala house, which was built in 1869, and a movie theater will be spread out over the next three to four years.

Cement walkways and benches will be added and markers will tell the history of the town, which is about a two-hour drive northwest of Omaha. All of the improvements will be in compliance with the



Battle Creek FFA members Kamden Showalter and Josh Tannehill staking one of the new trees in the Battle Creek Heritage Park.

Americans With Disabilities Act. That's important, Sextro said, because the park sits next to a nursing home.

The town received a grant from the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum, which helped to design and choose plants for an area of the park that surrounds the doctor's building.

"We wanted native plants and grasses from the State of Nebraska to fit the historical theme," Sextro said.

A total of 341 plants and 42 bushes and trees have been added. Sextro said the gardens look gorgeous. She serves on the revitalization committee with local residents Jessica Fouts, Donna Murphy, and Ginger Howser.

"The birds were walking through the plants. There were frogs," Sextro said. "It's just very peaceful."



Above: Battle Creek Heritage Park and Museum are now open to the public. History Walk Stands have been added throughout the walking paths, sharing the town's history.

Right: Heritage Park Revitalization Committee: Donna Murphy, Marcie Sextro, Jessica Fouts, and Ginger Howser. All photos provide by Marcie Sextro



A total of 341 plants and 42 bushes and trees were added to Heritage Park through a grant from the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum.

"We wanted native plants and grasses from the State of Nebraska to fit the historical theme."

- Marcie Sextro, Revitalization Committee member



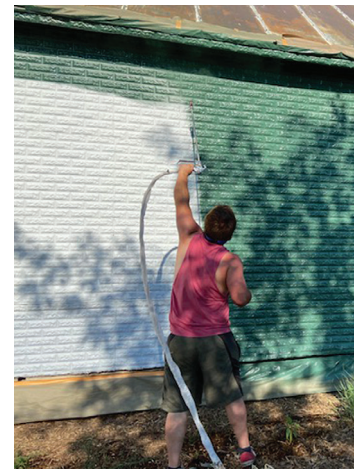
Above: Back row: Heritage Park volunteers, committee members, and NE Arboretum Sustainable Landscape Specialist Sarah Buckley on the park's opening day in front of a statue of Chief Petalesharo. **Right:** Caleb Sextro priming and painting the Heritage Museum that was once Dr. Edward Tanner's Office for over fifty years.

A ribbon cutting was held Aug. 3. The buildings will be open to view when renovations are completed.

Sextro said the project has been a lot of work. Organizers were hoping to have more done for the celebration, but they're excited that a vision that people in town had years ago is finally happening.

"We're trying to make that dream of that being a historical park come to pass," she said. "We're hoping to have a place to go that's beautiful. A pleasant place to relax and read a book." ■

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MOBILIZING FOR A HEALTHIER FUTURE:

How Nebraska municipalities can promote active transportation

In Nebraska, where everything from small towns to thriving cities coexist, a shift towards active transportation is taking root. You can see it in the \$40 million in federal grant funds awarded to almost 20 different Nebraska communities this year, or in the community-led bike share program blossoming in Columbus.



Cait Dumas-Hein
Associate Director
Bike Walk Nebraska

First things first, what is active transportation? The term refers to any mode of human-powered transportation, most commonly known as bike commuting, walking, rolling or using public transit or bike share.

When a community pursues infrastructure, policy, and programming, supporting more residents to safely and enjoyably move throughout their community, it increases quality of life, fosters healthy living, promotes economic development, and improves safety for drivers and non-drivers alike on roadways.

I could regale you with anecdotal stories of college students riding state highway shoulders to get to work or a mother pushing her stroller laden with grocery bags through a drainage ditch because a paved connection was non-existent. Or, I could cite statistics showcasing the majority of Nebraskans desiring alternatives to car-based transportation if it were safer and more accessible.

But at the end of the day, active transportation connects communities, and local advocates play an indispensable role.



Top image: Cyclists participating in Goldenride Bikefest stop in Pickrell. Pickrell feeds over 250 riders, volunteers, and staff as they pass through on their route to raise funds for their community. Above: A trail coalition representing consultants, planners, trail builders, cyclists, and city officials gather to discuss ongoing trail projects in the Lincoln area. Photos by Taylor Sterba.

Ways you can start connecting your community with more active transportation:

Host an event: Raise awareness and cultivate a community with an event. Communities such as Scottsbluff have taken advantage of the plethora of resources provided by nationally recognized events. Starting with an event is a great first step, as it helps highlight growth opportunities. Explore National Bike, Walk or Roll to School Day; National Bike to Work Day; or Safe Routes to School to get started.

Review local codes and policies: Track down your municipal codes, ordinances, and policies, and search for terms such as: 'bike,' 'trail,' 'bicycle,' 'mobility,' 'park,' 'scooter,' 'sidewalk,' 'pedestrian,' 'public ways,' and 'traffic.' It's easiest to weed out unfriendly statutes like honking at a cyclist as you pass, requiring bike registration, or restricting biking in certain areas.

Find a champion (or two): A champion is a person in a position of influence within your community you can work with to ensure the perspective of cyclists and pedestrians is considered. Look to community stakeholders such as city directors, planners, or council members, in addition to school superintendents, community foundation directors, board of governors, health departments, tourism directors, or workplace managers.

Consider active transportation in planning: There is never an easier or more economical time to invest in active transportation infrastructure and programming than at the planning phase. Does your community have a complete streets policy or new development requirements for bike parking in addition to car parking? Or do they mention increased tourism or economic development in their comprehensive plan? While a less direct approach, bikes do mean business (especially in rural areas!). Look at your city's plans and see where you can plug in conversations about active transportation, infrastructure, and healthier living.



Above: Commuters use the bike-friendly infrastructure outside of The Hub Cafe to attend the closing part of the Bike Walk Nebraska Summit.

More ways to connect....

Team up with community partners:

Active transportation isn't only about trails or biking. Look to health departments, economic development corporations, and active living committees to plug into work they may already be pursuing. The more voices at the table, the better.

Reach out to statewide

organizations: While statewide organizations such as Nebraska Trails Foundation, Heartland Bike Share, or Bike Walk Nebraska aren't necessarily involved in every single project happening, they can often connect you with like-minded advocates, provide technical assistance, or provide letters of support for grant funding.

Active transportation projects are examples of success that tend to showcase years of behind-the-scenes work and valuable partnerships. Large and expensive retrofits aren't needed to make significant progress; small bike/ped improvements added to already planned infrastructure projects can be just as effective. Together is the only way forward to making walking, biking and rolling a safe and accessible part of The Good Life. ■

This column is written by Cait Dumas-Hein, the Associate Director of Bike Walk Nebraska.



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Gov. Pillen visits Wakefield to celebrate affordable housing efforts

BY PAM VANDERVEEN
WAKEFIELD CITY CLERK/TREASURER

In early October, Gov. Jim Pillen visited Wakefield to celebrate three properties that used Rural Workforce Housing and Nebraska Affordable Housing Trust Funds providing the community of 1,522 residents much-needed housing.

The Exchange, owned by Eric and Traci Riewer, offers a four-unit converted project right along Main Street above a coffee shop. Chad and Darcie Mackling, owners of the Mackling Triplex, offer a two-bedroom townhouse within city limits. Logan Creek Apartments, a project by R. Perry Construction, currently has a thirty-unit apartment complex offering one, two, and three-bedroom options. A second 30 unit complex is set to open at Logan Creek on November 1.

The Exchange and Logan Creek Apartments utilized Nebraska Affordable Housing Trust funds while the Mackling Triplex utilized Rural Workforce Housing dollars. Governor Pillen remarked about the impact each of these projects will have on the community. ■



Gov. Jim Pillen visited Wakefield to celebrate three new properties in the community. The new housing options were built using Rural Workforce Housing and Nebraska Affordable Housing Trust Funds. Above is the ribbon cutting for Logan Creek Apartments. Photos shared by City of Wakefield.

Meeting community needs



Above left: Gov. Pillen with Chad and Darcie Mackling at the Mackling Triplex ribbon cutting. Above right: Ribbon cutting at The Exchange with Gov. Pillen and the Riewer family.



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10 things great leaders do ... *differently*

1 Lean-In Listeners. Great leaders practice Habit Five from Stephen Covey's best-selling book *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*. They "seek first to understand, then to be understood." This practice causes them to ask a lot of questions and do a lot of listening before sharing their own ideas. They do this because all the asking and listening refines their ideas and makes them better.

2 Lean-In Learners. The best leaders have a growth mindset and are therefore life-long learners. They believe this approach helps improve every single day. As a side note, these leaders are also wise. They don't just learn from their own mistakes. They learn from the mistakes of others as well.

3 Long-Term Lenses. One result of being a "lean-in listener" and "lean-in learner" is great leaders develop long-term lenses. They tend to stick with an organization for quite a while and develop a long-term strategy for success.

4 Little Things. While great leaders focus on the big picture, they don't lose sight of the small details that can trip up an organization. Therefore, they build systems and bring in detailed-oriented people to make sure small mistakes don't devastate the organization's purpose or goals.

5 Laugh. This one might surprise you, but a sign of healthy leadership is the ability of a leader to laugh with others. Not inappropriate laughter directed at people, but playful and buoyant laughter with people. Laughter reduces stress, lightens each person's load, and most importantly, brings joy to the workplace.

6 Lunch. Great leaders eat meals with others. Whether it's with a mentor, fellow leader, or team member, they recognize that grabbing a meal with someone is an excellent way to slow down and connect more deeply.

7 Label and Launch. Strong leaders practice positive labeling to help team members launch. For instance, when they see potential in a team member, they say something like, "I believe you are the type of person who can _____." Yet these leaders do more than label; they also come alongside and coach the individual to launch in this new direction.

8 Look. The best leaders look out for their team while also looking at each team member. They look out for their team by standing up and supporting them. However, they also look at team members by holding people accountable for their actions. They share helpful feedback with individuals so that each person can build on what they are doing well while also correcting poor behavior or performance.

9 Let Go. While courageous leaders continue to move forward when the going gets tough, this doesn't mean they stick with things when plans fall apart. Great leaders are humble enough to admit when something isn't working, which allows them to pivot and try a different approach if necessary.

10 Love. The best leaders realize that love is a verb which is best seen in their actions. They are respectful, patient, and truthful with others. They don't prioritize their needs above the needs of others. And when they make a mistake, they admit it and seek to make things right. Bottom line, their team trusts them because they are trustworthy.

About the author



Kent Julian is a Certified Speaking Professional (CSP) with the National Speakers Association. Kent shares his DREAM-to-DO message in 35-40 venues with 25,000 to 30,000 association and business leaders each year. To find out more, visit KentJulian.com.

Battle^{of} the Badges

Norfolk first responders stepped up to preserve and protect life on and off the job during the Battle of the Badges blood drive hosted in coordination with the American Red Cross. This event was held at the perfect time as there continues to be a national blood and platelet shortage.

Donors were able to choose which organization they wanted to receive credit for their donations. In the end, Norfolk Fire pulled off a win with 20 donors, while Norfolk Police had 12. ■

Source – City of Norfolk



*Norfolk Fire Captain
Scott Bonsall*



*Norfolk Assistant Fire Chief
Trevor O'Brien*

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A background image of a construction site with yellow machinery on a road. Overlaid on the image is a white bison logo with a star on its back.

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