

Ord Area Chamber Awarded \$25,000 Grant for Downtown Ord Business Improvements

The Ord Area Chamber of Commerce has been awarded a \$25,000 grant from the Federal Home Loan Bank through the Joint Opportunities for Building Success (JOBS) program. The application was submitted under the name “Revitalize Ord” and is designed to assist business owners with funding for storefront improvements. These improvements can be things such as windows, signage, lighting, awnings, paint, etc.

The \$25,000 grant will be used to create a revolving loan fund in which business owners could apply for a maximum of \$5,000 toward their project. The applicant will need to provide 25% matching funds. The application, if approved, will provide the business owner with a 5-year 0% interest loan. Loan payments will be deposited back into the revolving loan fund so other businesses could apply for funds in the future.

Eligible applicants will be any commercial property located in the central business district of Ord, Nebraska. Eligible activities include repair to exterior facades; masonry repair; cleaning, repairing or replacing cornice; entrances; doors; windows; decorative detail; awnings; sign removal; repair or replacement; tin removal and exterior painting. Ineligible activities would include refinancing existing debts; business inventory; equipment; new construction; improvements made prior to loan approval and periodic maintenance of the building.

The Chamber would like to thank First National Bank in Ord for their willingness to be the applicant for this project as they are a member of the FHLBank in Topeka. At this time, a Design Committee will be established. This committee will be composed of a person from the construction industry, a member of Ord’s planning commission, a member of the Ord Area Chamber Board, a lender and Ord’s Zoning Administrator. The design guidelines that were established in 2003, with the assistance of Nebraska Main Street, will be reviewed and updated. It is anticipated that businesses in the downtown business district will be able to apply for loan funds in October 2007. Once these guidelines are updated and applications are available, further information about the application process will be released. For more information about this program, contact the Ord Area Chamber at (308) 728-7875.



Don Blaha and Russ Blaha of First National Bank in Ord present the \$25,000 grant check to Neal Carson, President of the Ord Area Chamber, and Bethanne Kunz, Director of the Ord Area Chamber.