

## Winter 2012 Quarterly Report

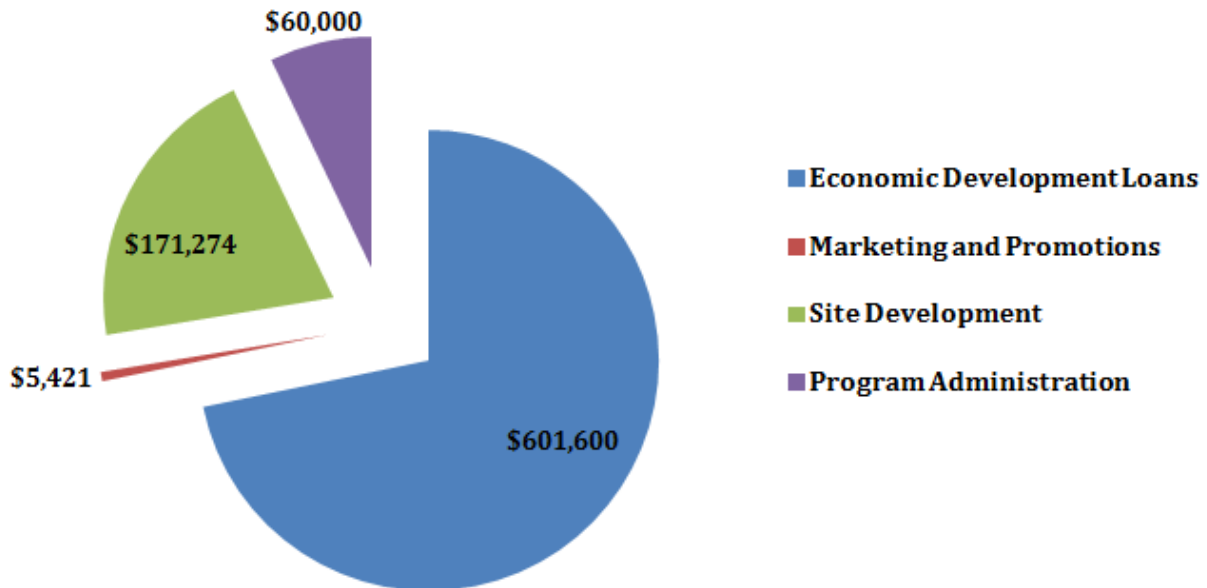
### 1. Business Development

#### a. Sales Tax Loan Program (12/27/11) Activity

##### i. Current Fund Balance

|                                       |                    |                      |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| <b>TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE</b>          | <b>\$1,052,756</b> |                      |
| <b>Funds Committed</b>                |                    | <u>Est. Due Date</u> |
| Sales Tax Reserve (in budget)         | \$0.00             |                      |
| NNI Construction Financing Fund       | \$300,000          | 10/1/2011            |
| New Neighborhoods Infrastructure Fund | \$293,458          | 12/1/2011            |
| New Neighborhoods Engineering Fees    | \$16,051           | 1/1/2012             |
| Loan 2011-02                          | \$232,000          | 10/1/2011            |
| Loan 2011-07                          | \$2,500            | 12/1/2011            |
| Mortensen Site Signage                | \$10,000           | 3/1/2012             |
| <b>TOTAL FUNDS COMMITTED</b>          | <b>\$854,009</b>   |                      |
| <b>FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR USE</b>        | <b>\$198,747</b>   |                      |

##### ii. Year-End Sales Tax Loan Use: 2011 Total Expenditures = \$838,295



iii. **Sales Tax Refund:** A refund claim of \$198,977.62 was approved by the Nebraska Department of Revenue for a qualified Nebraska Advantage economic development project. Nebraska Advantage, a statewide incentives program, makes available tax incentives for business development projects that meet certain employment and investment thresholds. The amount will be subtracted from monthly sales tax collections for economic development until paid in full.

- b. **Business Development Seminars Held:** VCED, the Chamber and REAP hosted four QuickBooks sessions held on November 8 and 9 (two beginner/two advanced) for 23 participants. Additionally, a five-week business plan basics course is scheduled to begin 1/18/12. Topics for the business plan basics course include financial management, marketing, advertising/promotion, customer relations, and goal setting.
  - c. **Loans Approved:** Loan 2011-07 approved in the amount of \$2,500 to open a new daycare in Ord.
  - d. **Small Business Consultations:** Consulted ten small business or prospective small business owners; provided funding and technical assistance information for all.
2. **Chamber of Commerce**
- a. **Facade Loan Approved:** A \$5,000 facade improvement loan was approved for one downtown business.
  - b. **Ribbon Cuttings:** One, Griess Automotive in Arcadia.
  - c. **Community Appreciation Pancake Feed:** A Community Appreciation Pancake Feed was hosted by the Ord Area Chamber of Commerce on October 16. The purpose of the Pancake Feed was to thank community patrons who support local businesses.
  - d. **WinterFest:** The Chamber Board of Directors, along with volunteers and participating businesses, hosted another year of successful WinterFest activities and shopping specials. The celebration included a downtown parade, soup suppers, and more. The program officially kicked off the Ord Area Option, a shopper rewards program for 2011-2012.
  - e. **Christmas Shopping Promotions/Community Soup Suppers:** Three community soup suppers, the Ord Area Option and cooperative marketing helped make 2011 another good year for Christmas promotions. \$1375 in ChamberBucks were awarded for the shoppers that participated in the program. A total economic impact of \$8,125 has been calculated to date, with the program set to finish the last weekend in February. To read more, visit: [www.ordnebraska.com/christmas-promotions-at-local-chamber-businesses/](http://www.ordnebraska.com/christmas-promotions-at-local-chamber-businesses/)
  - f. **Photo Contest Completed:** The 3rd Annual digital photography contest has grown each year, both in participation and online interactions. This year, 36 photos were submitted for the fall campaign with 648 votes for participating photographers. To see the results of the contest, visit [www.ordnebraska.com/blog](http://www.ordnebraska.com/blog)
3. **Community Development**
- a. **New Neighborhoods:** Phase I infrastructure has been completed. Phase II homebuilding has commenced with one market rate home currently being constructed. One home has been contracted to begin, weather permitting, in early 2012. The second home constructed by New Neighborhoods Developer, LLC will call for bids in March 2012.
  - b. **Vision Valley County 2020 Plan Completed:** Valley County Economic Development and UNL's College of Architecture have completed project development recommendations for local leaders. Among the proposed projects include Downtown Revitalization Phase II, riverfront development along the North Loup River, green seams safe walking paths, Anderson Island improvement and countywide tourism development along the North Loup River. VCED will meet with leadership in January 2012 to begin strategic planning for suggested projects. To learn more of Vision Valley

County 2020, visit: [www.ordnebraska.com/vision-valley-county-2020-where-do-we-go-from-here/](http://www.ordnebraska.com/vision-valley-county-2020-where-do-we-go-from-here/)

- c. **Trail of the Loup Hike/Bike Trail:** Feasibility study has been received and local leadership will incorporate both the scope of the project and overall costs with recommendations made from Vision Valley County 2020.

#### 4. Capacity Building

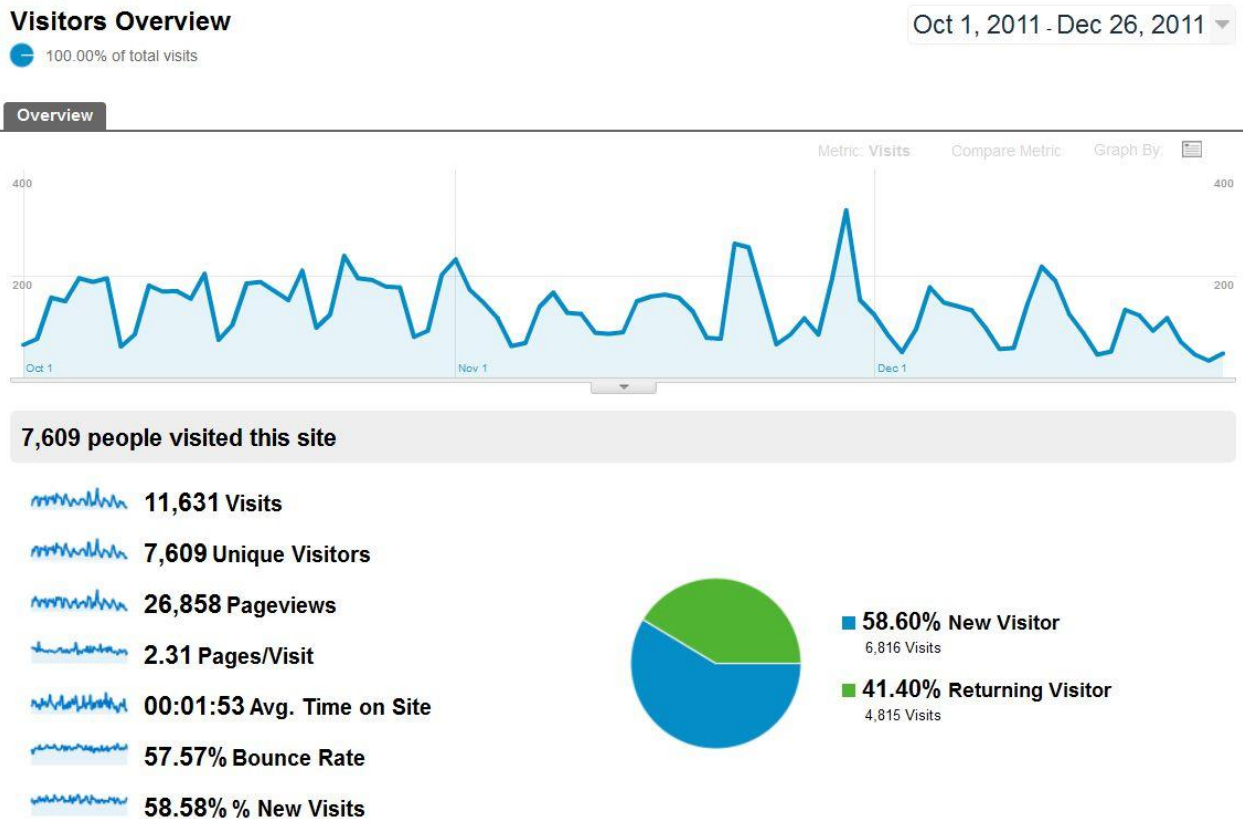
- a. **RCDI Convening Session Held:** Central Community College-Columbus hosted a three-county (Valley, Sherman and Greeley) convening session for a \$175,000 capacity building grant through USDA Rural Development. The purpose of the grant to build economic development and growth capacity within the three-county region. Project partners include CCC, the Nebraska Community Foundation, the Heartland Center for Rural Leadership, area school districts and county economic development organizations.

#### 5. Tourism Promotion

- a. **VisitValleyCounty.com Website Update:** A new tourism website for Valley County has been completed and will launch 1/3/2012. The redesign effort has moved the website to a content management system and is built to sell the Loup Valley's beautiful physical attributes to potential travelers. In addition, primary emphasis was placed on the local hospitality industry and retail so travelers are aware of the options available in the local business community.

#### 6. Marketing

- a. [www.ordnebraska.com](http://www.ordnebraska.com) website statistics (October - December):



| Page                                | Pageviews ↓ | Unique Pageviews | Avg. Time on Page | Bounce Rate | % Exit |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------|--------|
| 1. /                                | 4,337       | 3,335            | 00:01:33          | 31.53%      | 33.55% |
| 2. /work/                           | 1,808       | 1,426            | 00:01:05          | 60.33%      | 44.19% |
| 3. /jobs/category                   | 1,490       | 1,335            | 00:01:59          | 80.57%      | 78.12% |
| 4. /live/                           | 1,278       | 1,040            | 00:01:01          | 62.96%      | 23.94% |
| 5. /list/                           | 1,205       | 800              | 00:00:47          | 27.75%      | 25.48% |
| 6. /blog/                           | 1,016       | 793              | 00:01:35          | 49.21%      | 37.70% |
| 7. /play/                           | 730         | 598              | 00:01:24          | 58.11%      | 31.23% |
| 8. /live/housing/                   | 647         | 412              | 00:01:46          | 44.75%      | 39.57% |
| 9. /october-photo-contest-voting/   | 578         | 359              | 00:01:26          | 63.16%      | 53.98% |
| 10. /november-photo-contest-voting/ | 460         | 301              | 00:02:32          | 60.68%      | 56.74% |

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## 7. Publications, Media Coverage and Reports

- a. **Nebraska Entrepreneur:** *Entrepreneur Spotlight with Angie Svoboda of Good Life Pharmacy:* [www.nebraskaentrepreneur.com/featured-content-gallery/entrepreneur-spotlight-angie-svoboda-with-good-life-health-services/](http://www.nebraskaentrepreneur.com/featured-content-gallery/entrepreneur-spotlight-angie-svoboda-with-good-life-health-services/)
- b. **Nebraska Entrepreneur:** *Entrepreneur Spotlight with Guy Lewis of Valley Fire Pottery:* [www.nebraskaentrepreneur.com/news/entrepreneur-spotlight-guy-lewis-of-valley-fire-pottery/](http://www.nebraskaentrepreneur.com/news/entrepreneur-spotlight-guy-lewis-of-valley-fire-pottery/)
- c. **Grand Island Independent:** *Ord Tackles Housing Shortage:* <http://bit.ly/svffw3>
- d. **The Daily Yonder:** *How We Build Valley County:* [www.dailyyonder.com/how-we-built-ords-economy/2011/11/14/3601](http://www.dailyyonder.com/how-we-built-ords-economy/2011/11/14/3601)

### Questions?

Please contact Valley County Economic Development and the Ord Area Chamber of Commerce at:  
(308)728-7875 or [calebpollard@ordnebraska.com](mailto:calebpollard@ordnebraska.com)