



City of Minden Progress Report 2010

CITY OF MINDEN PROGRESS REPORT 2010



Nine years ago, with dreams in mind, the City of Minden developed a Comprehensive Plan. Within this Comprehensive Plan were community development goals. Now after several of those goals have been attained by the city or by other community organizations and groups, the city looks at itself with a sense of pride and continues to assess future improvements and projects. Some of the community development goals achieved in the last ten years are below.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & STRATEGIES ACHIEVED:

***Infrastructure Improvements-** Revenue bonds in 1999 helped to pay for the upgrading of the north Minden Sub-station, the renovation of both the water and sewer treatment plants and a new trunk line to the new water tower. In 2000, the city erected a new water tower to provide better fire protection and water pressure in the west part of the city.

***Better Recreational and Public Space-** In 2001, playground equipment was purchased by the city that utilized Peter Kewitt funding and was placed in Legion Park. * In 2006, Chautauqua Park received new playground equipment donated by a private party and a \$16,000 private grant from GameTime for a "Slidetopia."



* The Jaycee Park received a new backstop for the ball field, thanks to a Boy Scout Eagle Scout project. * Minden was the recipient of a newly designed ballpark in 2006 that was a community project by a local church in memory of a young life lost. * In 2009, two dilapidated picnic shelters were demolished in two of the parks and replaced by two shelters that were designed by Minden's

own Morton Buildings, Inc. * Jaycee Park received new grass throughout the park in 2009 after the installation of an underground sprinkler system. * In 2003, the swimming pool heaters were changed to an electric heat pump that created a savings of 75% per year for the city. * In 2008, the city installed modern shade tarps at the swimming pool to provide for much needed shade. * In 2010, the parks will become home to 30 new picnic tables that will replace the 25 old ones that are currently being donated to the Minden Chamber of Commerce and the Minden Public Schools.

***Beautification Efforts in Minden-** In 2007, the Kearney County Horticulture Club, with financial help from a Nebraska Arboretum grant, erected "Welcome to Minden" signs with landscaping on each of the four Minden corridor entry ways. * In 2009, the newly formed Minden Beautification Team held fund raisers and sold and placed 14 new locally designed benches and 11 new trash receptacles in the downtown area. * The



B Team also hung 16 hanging flower baskets around the downtown square and continued maintenance of the swimming pool planters and the four downtown flower corners. * Minden received the designation of Tree City USA in 1980 and every year since 1991. Minden has also received the Tree City USA Growth Award six times since 2000.

***Going Green-** The city began offering curbside recycling in 1994. Waste oil and household waste can also be recycled along with the normal paper, plastic and metal recycling. * A city/county wide cleanup is held every other year. * The city passed a water conservation ordinance in 2003.

***Community Improvement Programs-** In 2000, Minden was given the designation of Graduate Associate Member after five years of participation in the Nebraska Lied Main Street Program and now continues their membership. * In 2000, Minden received a 3rd place Community Development Award in Class IV by participating in the Nebraska Community Improvement Program.

***Formation of Kearney County Economic Development Agency-** The Kearney County Economic Development Agency (KCEDA) mission is to help small businesses in Kearney County achieve their goals by giving out small loans. Since its formation in 2005, KCEDA has given out eight small business loans for a total of \$117,000 and has most recently offered a 0% Façade

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Improvement Fund for businesses to improve the visual aesthetics of the front of their business. They maintain their web site at www. Kearneycounty.net.

***Formation of the City of Minden Economic Development-** In 2007, the City of Minden created an economic development position and the Minden Economic Development Advisory Council (MEDAC).

***Economic Development Projects-** The Minden Economic Development Department began to concentrate efforts on communicating with the community to stimulate conversation regarding business growth and to inspire the community to breathe progress again. For the first time ever in 2009 at the new community event MAADays (Manufacturing and Agriculture Appreciation Days), MEDAC awarded three Minden community awards for Manufacturer of the Year, Entrepreneur of the Year and Friend of Minden.

***PK Partnership-** PK Partnership, formed in 2006, is a consortium of area resource and economic development service providers from Phelps and Kearney County who have found a niche in providing workshops



and resources to area businesses for Business Transitions, Youth Entrepreneurship, I & E (Innovators and Entrepreneurs) Club, Leadership and the PK EDGE Class. The Minden Chamber and the Economic Development Department find their participation in the partnership to be very beneficial for Minden. The new web site at www.pkpartnership.org provides local information for events and workshops around Minden.

***Community Redevelopment Authority-** In 2002, the City of Minden reorganized the Community Redevelopment Authority (CRA.) The CRA developed land and infrastructure for a residential development called West Minden Estates and an industrial strip along West Minden's Industrial Drive. As of 2010, two businesses are located in the industrial site and three new houses are inhabited in the housing development. There are housing lots sold for two more spec houses to be built in the spring of 2010 and several lots are designated for a duplex development by a Lincoln development company that is planning to build eight duplexes in 2010.

***Cooperation with Partners-** In 2009 to help aid the community's retail businesses, the city chose to financially support the Minden Chamber of



Commerce which allowed the director to work full-time hours. The Chamber oversees their new web site that was funded with a marketing grant at www.mindenne.org. The Chamber also oversees several large community events; such as Cranefest, Bandfest, and the new popular 2-day event, MAADays. The Chamber Director keeps the community updated with a bi-monthly column in the local newspaper and weekly e-mail update.

***Tourism-** Pioneer Village has an updated web site at

www.pioneervillage.org and has plans for a new event called "Inventor's Expo." Their site was updated in 2008 with funds from a tourism marketing grant. * The Kearney County Historical Society is putting together a map that will highlight Cemetery and Oregon Trail tours in Kearney County. * In 2009, www.visitkearneycounty.com was unveiled promoting Kearney County Tourism. This web site rides piggyback with the Minden Chamber web site. * Www.centralnebraskaadventures.com, a regional web site, was unveiled in 2008 and is a great place to check out the attractions in Minden.



We live in a great state that is progressive and realizes the importance of rural economic development. Small businesses and entrepreneurship are supported in Minden. Some of the state & federal resources that the city has mobilized are below.

LOCAL, STATE AND FEDERAL RESOURCES UTILIZED:

***Community Development Block Grant & Job Creation-** Kearney County was awarded a CDBG grant in 1997 for \$203,000 and the City of Minden has been awarded 5 CDBG grants for a total of \$1,629,000 since 2000, with two of those grants awarded in 2008. It was inspiring when other communities were laying off people in 2008, Minden's manufacturers were expanding and hiring. These funds have allowed the creation of the City and County Reuse Funds of which 12 loans have been loaned out totaling an amount of \$497,500. Job creation resulting from these grants and reuse loans was 134 full-time employees.

***Nebraska Department of Roads Transportation Enhancement Program-** The City of Minden was approved in 2009 for funding in the amount

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of \$473,267 to design and construct a hike and bike trail through the Transportation Enhancement (TE) Program. Minden will provide \$118,317 to complete this project in 2011.

***Surveys-** Several surveys and studies have been implemented to keep city projects meeting their objectives. * In 2003, a Community Needs Survey was completed with results helping to plan community improvement activities. * In the spring of 2007, an Appreciative Inquiry Study and a Tourism Target Study were completed by the Chamber. A Beautification Team formed because of these studies. * In the summer of 2007, a Workforce Housing Survey was done by the Economic Development Department. * Another survey, completed in 2008 by the University of Nebraska and several Minden high school students, was a shortened version of a community needs survey; thus confirming the need of a Minden Community Day.

***Business Retention and Expansion-** The first large economic development project was the Nebraska Business Retention and Expansion (BR&E) Visitation Program completed in 2007. Interviews were held with 35 of Kearney County's largest manufacturers and employers. BR&E visits now continue monthly by MEDAC.

***Tax Increment Financing-** In 2000 and 2001, Plains Produce Inc., a hydroponic greenhouse, and KAAPA Ethanol, the only farmer owned ethanol plant in Nebraska, utilized tax increment financing to help finance the public costs associated with their development projects.

Minden has definitely come a long ways over the past decade and is proud of the fact of being know as a very attractive place to raise a family. There are quality jobs available and a workforce to be found. With a medical clinic full of doctors, a hospital right in town and a public school system that continues to provide a 96% graduation rate, Minden is definitely a good place to call home! Some of Minden's major accomplishments follow.

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

***Opera House Renovation-** The Minden Opera House, renovated in 2000, plays an integral part of the Minden Downtown Square. It is host to bands, dances, wedding receptions, conferences, play productions and more. Minden is proud of the fact that no tax dollars used for the renovation; instead the local Kearney County Community Foundation played an important part in the finance solicitation.

***Street Upgrades-** One of the accomplishments with the largest positive impact was the repairing of the city's streets. In 2006, the City Council had the foresight to present a bond to the community that would provide

money to repair the streets. It was voted on and approved by the Minden citizens. During the summer of 2008, 84 city streets were repaired to quality standards. What a relief and what an attitude change among the community!



***Marketing-** Communication is Key! * The Mayor provides a monthly column in the local newspaper to keep the community updated. * A "Mayor's Breakfast" is hosted quarterly for the public to attend and be informed. * The Economic Development Director writes monthly columns about loans and resources that are available. The Director also sends out an electronic newsletter called the KCEDA Update.

***Social Media Marketing-** Social media efforts have been implemented by the City of Minden. They utilize Twitter as an outlet for general information at MindenNebraska and also post available jobs on Twitter at MindenJobs. * The City recently created a "Fan" facebook page which had a following of 630 fans in less than two month's time. The "Minden, Nebraska" facebook page is proving to be a great way to provide information to the community such as the recent article featuring Minden in the Nov./Dec. '09 issue of NebraskaLife.

***Internet Web Sites-** A brand new web site for the city, www.mindennebraska.org, was released to the community in January of 2009. * Partnering with the City of Kearney in 2007, Minden was able to be part of the new www.kearneyareajobs.com web site. This site is available for Minden businesses to use as part of their hiring efforts.

***Future Goals for Minden-** Efforts continue to better Minden. Future goals for the City of Minden include the completion of a new comprehensive plan, a new city logo and positioning statement, and an upgrade to the city's web site. Anticipation grows as applications have been sent in for funds to complete these projects.

An economic development private grant application has just been sent in by the Beautification Team seeking financial help for new banners on the downtown entry light poles and for four locally designed bicycle racks. The Beautification Team also plans to work

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with business owners and improve the aesthetics of the corridors into Minden. Other future plans include the painting of the downtown light poles, landscaping along the proposed Hike and Bike Trail and sun solar light fixtures on the courthouse lawn.

The City of Minden continues to work on storm water projects and is currently applying for funds for these projects. The city is also seeking an Energy Efficiency grant to improve the lighting in the public library. Besides that, the city is hoping to be able to move forward with Fire Station Renovations with a grant application sent into Homeland Security. Plans are also in store to educate the community on ground water and to provide a Wellhead Protection Ordinance. Future safety and aesthetics goals include replacing a large majority of the downtown sidewalks.

With the recent creation of a Code Enforcement Officer, a new city position, the city is hoping to

encourage residents to clean up their yards and residences. * Later this fall, Minden will become one of the hosts of the Nebraska Economic Developers Association fall conference. * The Economic Development Department continues their efforts to make the city attractive to outside businesses and is currently working to attain the desired designation of a Nebraska Certified City. An application to attain this status will be sent in this summer.

***OUTLOOK- POSITIVE-** The City of Minden offers a variety of services that enhance the community's quality of life. The people who live here invigorate the community with new businesses which in turn spark a community spirit and unbridled optimism about its future. With our low crime rate, affordable housing, accredited schools, and community activities, Minden continues to be an attractive place to live.

CITY ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF

CITY ADMINISTRATOR

Brent Lewis

CITY CLERK/TREASURER

Jami Manedele

OFFICE MANAGER

Connie Beck

OFFICE ASSISTANT

Abbey Jordan

CHIEF OF POLICE

James Huff

UTILITIES SUPERINTENDENT

Mike Kleen

STREET SUPERINTENDENT

Chris Klahn

COMMUNITY SERVICES/

CITY ENFORCEMENT OFFICER

Shane Bock

CEMETERY SUPERINTENDENT

Ralph Layton

PARK SUPERVISOR

Dennis Lammers

FIRE CHIEF

Craig Space

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Lisa Karnatz

MAYOR OF MINDEN

Roger Jones

CITY COUNCIL

The City Council meets on the first and third Mondays every month at 6 pm in the City Chambers.

Arlen Osterbuhr, President

Mike Kleen

Lathan Thompson

Ted Griess

CITY OF MINDEN

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Hours of Operation

M-F: 8 am – Noon, 1 pm – 5 pm