

BECA is based on the premise that when organizations unite for a common cause and pool their resources, great things really can and do happen,

Purpose of the Building Entrepreneurial Communities Act (BECA)

The Building Entrepreneurial Communities Program supports economically depressed rural areas of Nebraska in building entrepreneurial communities through grants that create community capacity to build and sustain programs that generate and retain wealth in the community and region.

The Department of Economic Development, with assistance provided by the Rural Development Commission, has established and administers a grant process to provide grants to two or more local units of government or census tracts that are collaborating on a project related to the purpose of the Building Entrepreneurial Communities Program with priority given to projects that best alleviate chronic economic distress.

Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants include local units of government or census tracts. At least two local units of government or census tracts must collaborate on the project.

Eligible Activities

Eligible activities must be projects that address one (or more) of the following:

1. Provide education and technical assistance to energize small business development and entrepreneurship;
2. Provide technical assistance to facilitate small business transfer;
3. Build community business capacity and leadership programs;
4. Generate opportunities that will attract and retain young people and families;
5. Provide education about philanthropy and intergenerational transfer of wealth;
6. Build community endowments to support these activities; (*Note: this grant is NOT seed money for endowments, it is for education on how to build endowments.*); and
7. Provide for community initiatives to attract new residents.

Planning Grants

Planning grants may be awarded to *limited resource areas* in amounts not exceeding \$5,000 for the purpose of establishing collaborations and developing proposals for submission. There is **no match requirement** for planning grants.

Part III. Application Form

Building Entrepreneurial Communities Act

*Proposals must be kept to **10 or fewer typed pages** including attachments and addenda
(with the exception of cash match support letters)*

1. Project name: (Please limit project name to four or five words.) Preparing for our Future			
2. Grant Amount Requested: \$ 4,540 Planning Grant Application <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
<i>(Planning grants may request up to \$5,000. Other grants may request up to \$75,000.)</i>			
3. Application must be a collaboration of at least <u>TWO</u> local units of government or census tracts with the exception of planning grant applications. At least <u>ONE</u> applicant must meet either the <u>distress</u> criteria OR the <u>limited resource area</u> criteria. (Only list the <u>collaborating partners</u> here. A detailed description of the <u>project partnership</u> is requested on the next page.)			
Applicant A: City of Lexington			
Applicant B:			
<i>(List any other collaboration partners – not all participants)</i>			
4. Check applicable <u>DISTRESS</u> criteria (if applicable). See Part IV for distress eligibility determination. Only ONE applicant needs to meet any of the distress criteria.			
	Unemployment Rate	Per Capita Income	Population Loss
Applicant A:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Applicant B:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(Add lines as needed for additional applicants)			
5. Check <u>LIMITED RESOURCES AREA</u> criteria (if applicable). See Part V for limited resources area eligibility determination. Only ONE applicant needs to meet either of the limited resources criteria.)			
	Per Capita Income	Population Loss	
Applicant A: City of Lexington	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Applicant B:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

(add lines as needed for additional applicants)

6. Project Partnership: Describe the partnership that will financially support this project: *names of communities, organizations, agencies (public and private)*. (A signed letter of commitment from each partner detailing their CASH match support is required with the application, and is not counted in the 10-page maximum. Only list here those partners who are actual CASH supporters.) Planning grant requests do not need to complete this section.

7. Administering Agency/Entity: *(This will be the entity administering the funds and responsible for the monitoring and reporting. This may be one of the applicant partners or their designee. Funds will only be disbursed to a local government application partner who will then redistribute funding to third party designees, if applicant is not the administering entity.)* Provide the contact information below IF administering agency/entity is different than funding recipient named above.

Name of Administering Agency/Entity: Dawson Area Development

8. Contact Person from Administering Agency/Entity: Jennifer Wolf

**9. Mailing Address: P.O. Box 106
Cozad, NE 69130**

10. Phone: 308-784-3902

Fax: 308-784-3941

11. Email: jwdad@cozadtel.net

12. Project Summary: *(Please provide a concise summary - approximately 25 words or less - suitable for use in news releases.)*

The City of Lexington has a vision that there is potential for a collaboration among area communities, business and industry, local workforce, and the educational systems to create a regional technical assistance center.

13. Project Description: *This section needs to be filled in by all applicants including those applying for planning grants.*

- **Please identify the geographic area represented by this project.**

<u>Community</u>	<u>District #</u>	<u>Senator</u>
All of Dawson County	36	Wightman
All of Gosper County	38	Carlson
Portions of Frontier County	44	Christensen

- **How will the project realize multi-area or multi-community cooperation and**

impact?

In 2006, Dawson Area Development created a regional program called ABLE (Advocating for Business Labor Education). This program is a partnership between seven K-12 schools and area businesses to expose students to the career opportunities in our area in an effort to inform our youth they can "come back home" and help develop our local workforce. The ABLE program is funded through the seven school districts, Dawson Area Development, and approximately 20 of the local businesses and industries.

The success of the ABLE program has created the impetus to try and develop a larger collaboration to not only expose students to opportunities, but to help develop workforce skills training, entrepreneurship assistance, and small business development. This new collaboration could create initiatives so that students and adults not only realize local opportunities exist, they can successfully prepare themselves to embrace those opportunities without leaving the area.

The outreach area for this collaboration will be the seven communities in Dawson County, which include, Lexington, Cozad, Gothenburg, Overton, Sumner, Eddyville and Farnam. Additional communities, which consider Lexington as their "economic hub" which includes Elwood, Smithfield, Eustis, and Miller will also, be included in the outreach efforts.

- **List measurable project goals. Describe how they will be documented and measured.** (*Use precise measurements, not general terms.*)

The goals of this planning grant are to:

GOAL 1: Attendance of 250 individuals at local community meetings.

1. Significant advertising and promotion of the possibility to participate in this collaboration will be done through use of
 - a. Posters to hang in all communities
 - b. KRVN radio ad campaign
 - c. newspaper advertising in Lexington Clipper Herald, Gothenburg Times, Beacon Observer and Tri-City Trib
 - d. brochure/marketing materials development
 - e. direct mail invitations to established community leaders
2. Because of the large geographic area, several meetings will be held across the three counties to gauge interest. Meetings will be held in the following communities and will be considered "phase 1" of the process to build the collaboration.
 - a. Lexington (marketed to Lexington and Overton)
 - b. Cozad
 - c. Gothenburg
 - d. Eustis (marketed to Eustis and Farnam)
 - e. Sumner (marketed to Sumner, Eddyville, & Miller)
 - f. Elwood (marketed to Elwood and Smithfield)
3. Leadership from each community will be identified to participate in regional meetings. Leadership will be selected based on interest in the project, individual strengths and background.

GOAL 2: Formation of an advisory group of 25 individuals.

1. Those individuals shall be representative of:
 - a. Each community in the outreach area
 - b. Manufacturing Sector

- c. Small Business Sector
 - d. Entrepreneurship training
 - e. Medical Industry
 - f. K-12 Education system
 - g. Community College system
 - h. University system
 - i. Area Youth
 - j. Area Workforce
 - k. Agricultural Sector
 - l. Service Sector
 - m. Technology Sector
2. Advisory Group will be the liaison between the collaboration and each community.
 3. Speakers will be brought in for the first two regional meetings to discuss initiatives occurring in other areas that have been tried and proven successful. This will help to create excitement about the possibilities, which exist for our area.

GOAL 3: A strong Collaboration will exist among business, labor, industry, and education

GOAL 4: Strategic Planning will occur for best practices to prepare for the regions "preferred future"

GOAL 5: The group will prepare an application for the Building Entrepreneurial Communities program

• How will the project address program purposes?

After the building of the collaboration, the group will specifically address several of the BECA program purposes. Those activities include:

- Providing education and technical assistance to energize small business development and entrepreneurship;
- Provide technical assistance to facilitate small business transfer;
- Generate opportunities that will attract and retain young people and families;
- Providing for community initiatives to attract new residents.

These four items are the primary concerns of our region. It is the hope that through this collaboration, our area can create on-going, sustainable programs that will address each one of the concerns. Once the collaboration is established, the advisory group will begin the Strategic Planning process on how our region could utilize a 60,000 s.f. building to address the issues of outmigration, small business development, entrepreneurship training, and business/industry retention. The collaboration will have to address issues such as how to fund this joint venture, how to address the needs of the region, and how to make the programs and services self-sustaining.

• How will the project demonstrate sustainability, or how will the project build economic development capacity?

Rural areas are at a huge disadvantage when it comes to providing opportunities to retain young people and families. In the case of Dawson County we have an abundance of jobs available, significant number of successful small business for sale, and strong industries paying higher than average wages. There is no mechanism in place that can assist

individuals in embracing these opportunities with the knowledge and skills they need to be successful.

Dawson County has had minor successes by starting to offer the EDGE program, creating the ABLE program, and offering worker training grants through the department of Labor. However each of these above efforts are programs that are offered at limited times during the year, and it is usually hit or miss if someone receives the education or technical assistance they need. One of the purposes of creating a collaboration is so that we can develop on-going, sustainable programs in a designated location.

The Dawson County area loses a significant number of our population to other areas because they leave for training and never return. We also have a number of individuals that need training to enter the workforce, or need re-trained for a new skill, and there is currently no mechanism in place to assist those individuals. Dawson Area Development, as the lead economic development organization for this region would like to see a center where individuals can obtain the technical assistance, skills training, certifications, and education to succeed in small business or in our existing workforce.

The end results of the collaborative efforts will be a center that not only will help energize economic development it will help synergize the region as well. Regional and local technical assistance programs are available in this area on a very limited basis. Many residents do not know where to go and they are not aware the programs exist. This center will have a perpetual physical existence which will let people know this is the place to go if they are trying to enter the workforce, start their own business, build capacity in running a business, need assistance in choosing a career field, or just gather information on local opportunities. This center will also assist existing industries by providing a location for training, testing, and screening of employees. Central Community College has had limited course offerings because of lack of suitable space. This center will allow the community college to expand their courses, as well as give our area high schools a location where joint course offerings for students interested in technical trades can be held. These are just a few examples of how this building could be utilized. The purpose of this planning grant is to assess the interest in the project and assemble the right dynamic of individuals to lead this project into the planning stages. It will take a regional approach to make this center successful.

14. Please provide a timeline for the project. *This section needs to be filled in by all applicants including those applying for planning grants. Please state your timeline goals in quarterly segments ending December 31, March 30, June 30, Sept 30 and continuing quarterly until project completion or two years, whichever date is earliest. We recognize the timelines may need adjusting after the awards.*

- Marketing Material Development 2nd Quarter 2008
- Advertising Campaign 2nd Quarter 2008
- 6 Local Meetings held across region 2nd Quarter 2008
- 2 Regional meetings held in Lexington 2nd Quarter 2008
- Trip to other similar regional centers 2nd Quarter 2008
- 1st Formal Regional Advisory Group Meeting 2nd Quarter 2008
to create Strategic Plan

15. Has any portion of this project ever received a grant? If yes, state grant amount, purpose and source. NO

16. Is this project an existing project? If so, discuss how the grant will not be used for replacement funding, and explain how the grant will expand the existing project.

NO

All local units of government applicant partners must sign grant application:

CITY OF LEXINGTON
Name of Local Government Applicant A (Community)

JOHN FAGOT, MAYOR
Typed Name and Title of Applicant
Government Representative

Signature of Applicant
Government Representative

Date

Name of Local Government Applicant B (Community)

Typed Name and Title of Applicant
Government Representative

Signature of Applicant
Government Representative

Date

(Add additional signature lines as needed.)

NOTE: All local government applicant partners must provide statement of community consideration and approval of project application. This approval does not need to be presented with the application but must be presented **prior to receipt of funds**. Acceptable statements include village, community, or county minutes of meeting where project is discussed and approved.

BUDGET WORKSHEET - Prepare line item budget for all funds requested. Include signed letters of commitment for cash match and estimates for expenses exceeding \$1,000. All applicants must complete this worksheet.
Planning grants do not require any match but still need to itemize project expenses.

Activity	Grant Amount Requested	CASH Match (Amt & Source) Check if required match is 50% <input type="checkbox"/> or 25% <input type="checkbox"/>	Source & Description of OTHER (non-grant) Activity Funds	Total Funds
Marketing Materials:				
Print Brochures	\$ 250			\$250
Direct Mail Invitations & Postage	\$1,125			\$1,125
Flyers to hang up in communities	\$ 100			\$100
Visual Aids to have present at meetings	\$ 250			\$250
KRVN Radio Campaign	\$ 225			\$225
Meeting Expenses:				
Phone Calls	\$ 100			\$100
Mileage (Joe Pepplichtsch, John Fagot, Jen Wolf, John Bell x 6 local meetings in Lexington, Cozad, Gothenburg, Eustis, Sumner, Elwood)	\$ 665			\$665
Mileage (Jen Wolf, John Bell x 3 regional meetings in Lexington)	\$ 100			\$100
Bus Rental/Gas for Trip to Other Locations	\$ 300			\$300
Room Rentals	\$ 175			\$175
Supplies (hand-outs, large writing pads)	\$ 150			\$150
2 Speaker's mileage/fees	\$ 650			\$650
1-Meeting Facilitator	\$ 450			\$450
TOTALS	\$4,540			\$4,540