Conference Schedule

Wednesday, April 24

10:30am  Registration & Lunch
Lunch – served 11:00 - 11:45am
Location: Vintage Venue, 620 Court Street, Beatrice NE 68310

11:45am  Welcome from Stan Wirth, Mayor of Beatrice | Keynote Speaker
**Pioneering Possibilities - Our Heritage to Today’s Opportunities**
*Dell Gines, Senior Community Development Advisor, Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City*

12:50pm  Group Photo (in front of Carnegie Library, 218 N 5th Street)

1:30pm  Breakout Session I

- **History Meets Economic Development – Rehabilitation Projects & Incentive Programs**
  *Ryan Reed, Tax Incentive Coordinator, History Nebraska*
  **LOCATION:** Yesterday’s Lady, 113 N 5th Street
  Do you have a local landmark that you are wanting to rehabilitate? Learn about the Valuation Incentive Program (VIP) and the Federal Historic Tax credit program, it could work for your community.

- **Enhancing Quality of Life Through Placemaking**
  *Kim Wilson, University of Nebraska College of Architecture Professor*
  **LOCATION:** Tall Tree Tastings, 122 N 5th Street (start inside - walking tour)
  Placemaking can restore or enhance community assets that support a high quality of life. As rural community’s economies, environments, and demographics continue to change and evolve, developing locally-driven solutions to these challenges is critical to the long-term vitality. By bringing in new ideas, businesses, amenities, and social spaces, rural towns can help foster place attachment and encourage young people to stay in or return to their communities. Learn criteria that you use in your community to strengthen place and quality of life. Put your new knowledge to use as you walk through Beatrice’s downtown during this session.

- **Drinking in Local Entrepreneurship: A discussion on the evolution of the cider and craft beverage industry and its tie to community and agricultural success.**
  *Carla Snyder, Agricultural Entrepreneurship & Marketing Educator, Penn State University*
  **LOCATION:** Stone Hollow Brewing Company, 301 Court Street
  Agricultural products can directly create a *Taste of Place* in a community. Join us for a discussion on the evolution of the hard cider industry in Pennsylvania and how this craft beverage is experiencing a resurgence to enliven community tourism and regional connectedness throughout the U.S. as we take cues from other nations.
• **Community Fellows – It’s a Transformational Experience!**  
Shawn Kaskie, RFI Outreach Project Coordinator and Theresa Klein, RFI Director of Community Engagement, along with Amber Ross and Samantha Guenther, UNL students and 2018 Serviceship Fellows  
**LOCATION:** Carnegie Building, 204 N 5th Street  
Through a RFI serviceship fellows experience, communities are connected to college students and faculty, while students and faculty are connected to rural community mavericks. RFI Student Fellows, RFI Community Innovation Fellows and RFI Faculty Fellows are the inspirational and action-oriented mechanism by which RFI carries forward its mission and creates meaningful, tangible impact in the areas of workforce development, economic development, access and recruitment and retention of residents. Hear from two 2018 Serviceship Fellows and their transformational experiences and how your community can participate.

• **Transfer of Leadership in Rural Communities**  
Lindsay Hastings, UNL Department of Ag Leadership, Education & Communications Professor  
**LOCATION:** Patina, 512 Court Street  
The United States is poised to experience its largest transfers of leadership (56% of management occupations) in its history. Preparing rural community leadership for these transitions will be critical. This presentation will review new research results in rural community leadership transfer, offering several important considerations for Nebraska’s leadership pipeline.

• **Demographic Trends Impacting Your Business or Community**  
David Drozd, Research Coordinator, UNO Center for Public Affairs Research  
**LOCATION:** Brick And Mortar Coworking, 514 Court Street  
Demographics play an important part in understanding your community. Demographic data can help your community to understand population changes and trends that impact community life and local economics. See how Nebraska’s demographic makeup is changing, and the impact of aging, and what to expect in the years ahead.

3:00pm Breakout Session II

• **Downtown Upper Levels: Profiting from Housing and Other Creative Spaces**  
Shelley McCafferty, Second Story Consulting  
**LOCATION:** Yesterday’s Lady, 113 N 5th Street (start inside - walking tour)  
Most upper stories of downtown buildings were abandoned with post-war modernization and the trend towards suburbanization. Today, redevelopment of these spaces for housing can provide the foundation for a healthy vibrant community and downtown economic revitalization. There are historic preservation tax incentives programs that can ease the financial burden of upper-story redevelopment but require compliance with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation. Using vacant upper-story examples in downtown Beatrice, Shelley will walk you through the process of planning for upper-story apartments that comply with both the building code and the Standards for Rehabilitation.

• **Housing - It’s not Just a Personal Issue**  
Garry Clark, Executive Director at Greater Fremont Development Council and Sharon Hueftle, Executive Director, South Central Nebraska Economic Development District  
**LOCATION:** Patina, 512 Court Street  
We hear about a housing shortage, but is it real, and why is this happening? Sharon Hueftle will discuss the causes and some of the tools available to communities to address local needs. Garry Clark will offer innovative examples of how you can stimulate housing that will make your town more attractive to newcomers and potential residents.
CONNECTING ENTREPRENEURIAL COMMUNITIES

- **Breaking the Barriers to Business Transition Conversations**
  Odee Ingersoll, Center Director, University of Nebraska at Kearney, Nebraska Business Development Center
  **LOCATION:** Stone Hollow Brewing Company, 301 Court Street
  Addressing the topic of business transitions is a tough discussion for most business owners. Often the owners don’t know where to go for help or even worse, don’t share their intentions until it’s too late and the community loses a vital business. This session will provide insights and tactics on how to best assist your aging business owners and help them plan ahead for a successful transition.

- **Systematically Building an Entrepreneurial Ecosystem**
  Don Macke, Program Leader, Nebraska Extension Community Vitality Initiative and Vice President, e2 Entrepreneurial Ecosystems
  **LOCATION:** Vintage Venue, 620 Court Street
  “Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Building” will provide practical guidance for communities seeking to building stronger economies through entrepreneurship. Don with e2 Entrepreneurial Ecosystems will share national experience focused on community strategies you can use. Don’s presentation will include a framework, practical advice and stories from the field.

- **Increasing Community Engagement in a Digital Age**
  Jeremy Harris Lipschultz, College of Communications, Fine Arts and Media, University of Nebraska-Omaha
  **LOCATION:** Carnegie Building, 204 N 5th Street
  Increasing civic engagement in communities can be a challenge as traditional organization and communication patterns have changed. Through a Rural Futures funded project, we have worked with three communities to help increase civic engagement. This session will share practical steps that you can utilize in your community from establishing goals to measuring your reach. Understand potential resources that your community can use to increase civic engagement.

- **Getting Smart About Shrink Smart**
  David Peters, Department of Sociology, Iowa State University
  **LOCATION:** Tall Tree Tastings, 122 N 5th Street
  Learn how your community can continue to thrive despite depopulation. Peters has applied the shrink-smart concept to small towns to better understand the characteristics of shrinking yet thriving towns. Enhancing social capital, increasing civic engagement, and creating a culture of openness and support are all areas communities can focus on to continue thriving. Other suggestions include stabilizing agricultural employment and growing jobs in goods producing industries.

4:30pm  Breakout Session III

- **Building Entrepreneurial Ecosystems and Cultures Within our Communities**
  Michael W. P. Fortunato, Creative Insight Community Development
  **LOCATION:** Vintage Venue, 620 Court Street
  It is well known that building the entrepreneurial skills of an individual can help a business to succeed. However, this approach is very different from building the entrepreneurial culture and capacity of an entire community. In this session, we will explore how a community's culture and ecosystems can not only help current entrepreneurs, but also attract new ones, and help everyday citizens to realize their entrepreneurial dreams. We will also discuss how ecosystems differ from networks and communities, and how any town can build an effective ecosystem for entrepreneurship development.
CONNECTING ENTREPRENEURIAL COMMUNITIES

- **Communities and Community Reinvestment Act – Changing Opportunities**
  Dell Gines, Senior Community Development Advisor, Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City.
  LOCATION: To be assigned
  The Community Reinvestment Act is a federally mandated tool designed to spur economic development in economically distressed areas. Learn how to better work with local banks to support job creation, education, workforce and housing issues.

- **“SET”ting up a Regional Collaboration**
  Tim Borchers, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Peru State College and Rick Nelsen, Senior Economic Development Consultant, Nebraska Public Power District
  LOCATION: Brick And Mortar Coworking, 514 Court Street
  Together, 5 counties in Southeast Nebraska are creating opportunities through a regional collaborative effort. Stronger Economies Together (SET) program helped the region create an economic plan and build capacity to address immediate and long-term economic concerns. Hear the ups and downs of regional collaboration learned through three years of practice.

- **Digital Civic Engagement – What we Learned**
  Gena McPherson, Executive Director, Ravenna Chamber of Commerce; Dana Dennison, Ravenna Economic Development Corporation; Heather St. Clair, Ashland Public Library; Rex Nelson, Nebraska Extension
  LOCATION: Carnegie Building, 204 N 5th Street
  Ashland, Nebraska City and Ravenna have been participating in a RFI funded project to increase civic engagement using social media strategies. Each community identified goals and strategies unique to their community to help increase engagement. Learn about the strategies communities have taken from a regular Facebook Live, to the value of utilizing ads to a twitter town hall.

- **Pioneering The Practical – Practical Tips for Getting to Your Community’s Heart & Soul**
  David Weaver, Director of Communications, Orton Family Foundation
  LOCATION: Tall Tree Tastings, 122 N 5th Street
  Practical tips on why your community needs to understand its “Heart & Soul” and figuring out how to engage residents to create that together.

6:00pm **Reception and Heavy Hors D’oeuvres**
Location: Heritage Center, Homestead National Monument of America, 24405 SW 75th Road, Beatrice
Entertainment – Apple Street Gang & jam session, join in and have some fun

Dinner Optional and on your own – visit the excellent restaurants in the area, see packet
Thursday, April 25th

6:45am  **Walking Beatrice Trails** (feel free to run or bike) –
LOCATION: Meet up at Coffee Bistro, 106 N 5th Street
Hosted by: Homestead Running Club & First State Bank

7:30am  Breakfast on own, use local downtown venue coupons

8:30am  Morning Warm-up | Keynote
**Collaboration Brings Success to Beatrice**-- Angie Bruna, Executive Director, Beatrice Chamber of Commerce; Erin Chadwick, Marketing Coordinator, Economic Growth, NGage; Michael Sothan, Executive Director, Beatrice Main Street
LOCATION: Vintage Venue, 620 Court Street

9:15am  Breakout Session IV

- **Fighting Dilapidation – Tools to Address Problem Practices & Lessons Learned**
  Tobias Tempelmeyer, City Administrator, City of Beatrice
  LOCATION: Quilt Stitches, 505 Court Street
  Learn tools that were used by Beatrice to address problems within their downtown business district and lessons learned at they worked to fight dilapidation.

- **New Techniques to Catalyze Rural and Small Town Redevelopment**
  Michael W.P. Fortunato, Creative Insight Community Development
  LOCATION: Vintage Venue, 620 Court Street
  Rural areas, declining small towns, and isolated neighborhoods within cities can all be challenging places to launch a community redevelopment project, or catalyze community-based economic action. Due to stagnating economic conditions, the risk of investing in a redevelopment project can be very high. And yet, these neighborhoods are often the ones that need an economic boost or property facelift the most. Using a suite of techniques known as "New Economy" strategies, developers can begin to think differently about how to mitigate the risks associated with projects in areas that are otherwise unlikely to be developed. With only a few small changes to how we think about land reuse in rural areas, it is possible to generate organic momentum around traditional and non-traditional projects.

- **Benefits of the Cooperative Development Model**
  Greg McKee, Department of Agricultural Economics Cooperative Development Professor, UNL
  LOCATION: Security First Bank, 2301 N 6th Street
  Cooperatives benefits include providing a service in a community, improving bargaining power, reducing costs. And obtaining products or services otherwise unavailable. While Nebraska has a rich history of agricultural cooperatives, rural communities have the opportunity to explore the cooperatives for businesses in community to enhance and improve quality of life. Understand the benefits and how the cooperative model may work in your community or region.

- **Inclusion at Work: Strategies for Success**
  Luis Sotelo, Chief Diversity Officer, Doane University
  LOCATION: Patina, 512 Court Street
  Communities and organizations thrive when people of all backgrounds, identities, and perspectives feel like they belong. As Nebraska demographics change, learn strategies to successfully lead diversity and inclusion in businesses, nonprofits, governments, and educational institutions to drive innovation, engagement and productivity. Doane University Chief Diversity Officer Luis Sotelo will guide you through strategic elements, resources and case studies to help you create inclusive environments that celebrate your organization’s most valuable asset: human capital.
• **Networks = Unleashed Leadership in Living Systems**  
  Kayla Schnuelle, Facilitator & Consultant, Mission Matters  
  **LOCATION:** Carnegie Building, 204 N 5th Street  
  What are networks? How are they different? How do they add value to my organization, business or to me personally? The network leadership question for living systems is “What can I unleash?” This shifts the deep background assumption of leaders and reminds us that we are working with a living system instead of an inert one. When we ask: “What can I unleash?” we look for the energy flows and talents that already exist in our communities and on our teams. By unleashing talent, positive energy, or creativity, we see the network help us achieve our goals.

10:45am  Breakout Session V

• **Plan Implementation – Don’t Leave it to Chance**  
  Neal Fogle, Economic and Community Development Educator, Penn State University  
  **LOCATION:** Tall Tree Tastings, 122 N 5th Street
  
  Various planning efforts are used by communities and organizations to evaluate their current conditions, document their expected future, and prepare action steps to achieve their community and/or organizational goals. Such plans include community visioning, municipal comprehensive, and organizational strategic plans. While these plans have similarities as well as differences in overall purpose, process and content, they all play a role in effective economic and community development. No matter the plan type, they should strive for ultimate implementation of the recommendations and policies that were developed during their creation. This session will focus on factors (before, during and after plan preparation), that influence plan implementation.

• **Sticky Communities – It’s not just for Kids**  
  Jonathan Jank, President & CEO, Seward County Chamber & Development Partnership  
  **LOCATION:** Sunrise Bakery, 419 Court Street
  
  Seward County is working to create community family-friendly environments that attract and retain people in the area. From gaining greater understanding of new residents to creating actions that fit their needs, Seward County is becoming a Sticky Community.

• **Cooperative Development Success Story: 4th Street Market**  
  Sharlette Schwenninger, Elwood Cooperative Market  
  **LOCATION:** Security First Bank, 2301 N 6th Street
  
  Rural stores are an essential part of the social network in small towns. Everyone has to eat. Everyone needs groceries. When the grocery store closed, other businesses in town may also suffer a decrease in foot traffic. But we know that keeping the grocery store open in a small town is a real challenge. Learn how Elwood, population 698, banded together to open a cooperative grocery. Sharlette will share the successes and challenges.

• **Unleashing Local Assets for Community Impact**  
  KC Belitz, Chief Operating Office, Nebraska Community Foundation, with community representatives, Joy Stillmock (Syracuse), Rick Kentfield (Lewiston), Beth Roelfs (Diller), and Tammy Weers (Diller)  
  **LOCATION:** Vintage Venue, 620 Court Street
  
  Communities across Nebraska are imagining a brighter future and using the tools of philanthropy to unleash abundant local assets in their place. Volunteers in communities, whether the population is 50 or 25,000, are connecting ambitious people to build stronger communities and a Greater Nebraska. You will hear 4 inspiring success stories from the Nebraska Community Foundation network that you can replicate in your hometown!
• **Getting Smart About Shrink Smart**  
  David Peters, Department of Sociology, Iowa State University  
  **LOCATION:** Carnegie Building, 204 N 5th Street  
  Learn how your community can continue to thrive despite depopulation. Peters has applied the shrink-smart concept to small towns to better understand the characteristics of shrinking yet thriving towns. Enhancing social capital, increasing civic engagement, and creating a culture of openness and support are all areas communities can focus on to continue thriving. Other suggestions include stabilizing agricultural employment and growing jobs in goods producing industries.

12:00pm  
**Closing Session | Keynote**  
**Pioneering Language – Is the Vocabulary of Helping Small Towns an Obstacle to Their Very Success?**  
David Weaver, Director of Communications, Orton Family Foundation  
**LOCATION:** Vintage Venue, 620 Court Street  
What effect does the language we use have in predicting and inhibiting success in towns and rural places? Is there a way to think about communities in a new way, to create new outcomes?

12:45pm  
**Lunch on your own with Downtown Dollars**