

District III Digest

Volume 24, Issue 1

June 2006

Missouri River Corridor Tourism Conference held in Yankton

The Missouri River Corridor group hosted a regional tourism conference at the Kelly Inn in Yankton on March 23, 2006. Approximately 100 people attended, including state officials from both Nebraska and South Dakota, Convention & Visitor Bureau personnel, development corporations, Chambers of Commerce, local officials, local attractions, agritourism and small business owners, planning district personnel, and lodging providers.



(Above: Conference attendees checking in.
Photo courtesy of Images by Kim)

The purpose of the conference was to bring regional tourism organizations, local attractions, and businesses from both sides of the Missouri together, in order to learn how cooperative effort in planning and marketing will equally benefit us all.

Michael O'Connor, from the O'Connor Group out of Norfolk, Nebraska, gave a two-part presentation about marketing during the morning session. Paul Hedron, from the National Park Service, was the luncheon speaker, and DeeDee Raap, of Journey Works, wrapped up the afternoon with an interactive session entitled "Can we do it? Yes we can!"



(Pictured right: DeeDee Raap - afternoon session. Photo courtesy of Yankton Press & Dakotan)

During the session with Ms. Raap, conference attendees split into groups and brainstormed for ideas of what steps corridor participants can take next. There was great interest in continuing to meet as a tourism subgroup of the Missouri River Corridor to strategize about future endeavors within this region.

(Continued on page 5)

Communities Take Advantage of Main Street Training Opportunity

Through a grant from USDA Rural Development, District III is striving to improve Main Street development opportunities throughout the region. Utilizing the National Trust for Historic Preservation's "Main Street Program", District III is assisting four communities in implementing the Main Street Four Point Approach – a proven solution for downtown revitalization.

Participants in the Main Street Program represent many facets of the community. They include business owners, property owners, chambers of commerce, financial institutions, civic clubs, historic societies, consumers, elected officials, schools, and the media. District III staff help to train and organize a local team of participants in each community. Then committees are formed to focus on each of the different aspects of the Main Street Approach.

District III is currently working with local groups in Scotland and Plankinton. Scotland's group is studying ways to improve its restaurant, clothing, and entertainment services. The group in Plankinton will begin its revitalization activities by painting a downtown building for its upcoming quasiquincentennial celebration this summer. The cities of Mitchell and Yankton have also expressed interest in the program.

As a part of its regional Main Street development activities, District III sponsored a "Basic Training" Workshop on May 9th and 10th at the Logan Luxury Theatre in Mitchell. A total of 72 representatives from 27 different communities and organizations throughout the state were in attendance. Two individuals from the National Trust Main Street Center conducted the training. *(continued on page 2)*

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DIRECTOR'S CORNER

By Greg Henderson

Staffing Changes

District III recently experienced a staffing change. Kristi Bjerkaas has moved to North Dakota, and Matt Kerr is on his way to Sioux Falls (eventually Wisconsin). Both moves centered around positive happenings in their personal lives. Kristi and Matt have both contributed to the success of this organization and the region. We hope their time here will also benefit them in future endeavors.

On May 8, 2006, Kim King joined the District III staff to replace Kristi Bjerkaas as Administrative Assistant. Kim is originally from Avon, and has been living in Yankton with her three children for the last eleven years. She attended Northern State University where she majored in Business Administration. Kim comes to us from the Avera Yankton Care Center, where she was the Business Office Coordinator for nine years. Please welcome her to District III – we look forward to continuing excellent service to our region. □



Kim King, Administrative Assistant

Federal Budget

This edition of the Digest includes a federal budget insert. The President's proposal includes another effort at implementing the "Strengthening America's Communities Initiative" (SACI). Although the content is slightly different, the intent is the same. The administration wants to consolidate programs and alter the delivery of economic and community development assistance. Congress rejected SACI last year. Local governments should carefully consider the impacts of losing program options and long-standing agency relationships. For an in-depth analysis of SACI's effects on rural states, please call the office for a copy of the NADO Budget Report. Information is also available online at www.info@nado.org. □

District III Has Grown!

This year, the District III Committee expanded our service region with the addition of Buffalo County and the Crow Creek Sioux Tribe. Buffalo County has the unfortunate distinction of being the "poorest" county in the United States. While District III membership will not have an immediate impact on that statistic, it will give county residents more resources to pursue economic opportunities. □

(Main Street continued...)



Getting ready to begin: Todd Barmann from the National Trust Foundation with Eric from District III

Attendees were introduced to the concept of a comprehensive downtown revitalization program that can effectively serve towns of all sizes. The first day covered the basics of building a grass-roots organization, and issues surrounding design in the downtown area. The sessions on the second day focused on business improvement and promotion ideas. The workshop also included various group activities.

One final highlight of the event involved a group of individuals who took the opportunity to discuss the possibilities of establishing a statewide Main Street coordinating program, to possibly be housed at a state agency in Pierre.

If your community has an interest in Main Street development, please call Eric at the District III office. □

DISTRICT III ANNOUNCEMENTS & DEADLINES

- JUNE 7:** EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING IN WAGNER
- JUNE 16:** PRE-DISASTER MITIGATION PLANS DUE
- JULY 1:** CONSOLIDATED APPLICATIONS DUE
- JULY 4:** SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT APPLICATIONS DUE
- JULY 4:** INDEPENDENCE DAY – OFFICE CLOSED
- JULY 6:** DOT STIP MEETING AT DISTRICT III OFFICE
- JULY 15:** DENR SRF APPLICATIONS DUE
- AUGUST 1:** COMMUNITY ACCESS APPLICATIONS DUE
- AUGUST 1:** STATE WATER PLAN AMENDMENTS DUE
- AUGUST 9:** FULL COMMITTEE & EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETINGS IN CHAMBERLAIN
- SEPTEMBER 4:** LABOR DAY – OFFICE CLOSED

Your "one stop shop" for economic development is now easily accessible on-line. For information on...

- Funding Programs
- Planning Assistance
- Marketing Assistance
- Housing Programs
- GIS/Mapping Services
- Areawide Business Council
- Small Business Development Center
- Regional Classified Ads
- Census Information
- Business Support Services
- Tourism
- And Much More

Visit www.districtiii.org



2005 ABC Activity Summary

We are nearly halfway through 2006, but listed below is a summary of ABC's revolving loan fund activity for 2005. It was a successful year for ABC – we experienced an increase of approximately 20% in the number of applications reviewed, and the dollar amount of loans closed doubled. ABC is being asked to participate in more deals at higher levels. In an economic environment where commercial borrowing rates are rising, ABC's low interest can make a significant impact in the overall rate of borrowing and resulting cash flow. ABC currently has capital available to continue this positive trend in 2006 and is looking forward to being your "Go To" source for subordinate financing. Please don't hesitate to call with questions and projects.

21 New loans reviewed (\$1,384,020)

- 20 Approvals
- 1 Denial

11 Loans closed (total of \$569,020)

- 3 Loans approved, not acted on (total \$130,000)
- 1 Denial at \$35,000
- 6 Loans to close in '06 for a total of \$650,000

\$67,451 Average loan size

21 Jobs (FTE) created

40 Jobs (FTE) saved

\$1,741,780 in other funds leveraged (Equity, Banks & Other borrowings)

Location of ABC loans closed in '05:

- | | |
|----------------|----------------|
| Gregory - 1 | Emery - 2 |
| Mitchell - 2 | Wagner - 1 |
| Plankinton - 1 | Woonsocket - 1 |
| Yankton - 2 | Lake Andes - 1 |

If you would like information about the Areawide Business Council, please contact Lori at the District III office or visit the ABC website at www.districtiii.org/ABC/.



2005 SBDC Activity Summary

Below is a summary of both statewide and regional SBDC statistics for 2005. We are pleased to share the impact of the Center. 2006 is off to a good start, and we look forward to working with clients in your communities to make our region more economically viable.

Activity	Statewide	Yankton/ Mitchell SBDC
Clients counseled	1,560	187
Training attendees	1,228	102
Jobs created	610	35.5
Jobs retained	220	32.5
SBA Loans	\$17,855,873	\$2,137,020
Non-SBA Loans	\$32,151,188	\$3,512,159
Equity	\$13,650,960	\$ 879,275

For information about free business counseling, call Sue at the SBDC in Yankton (605) 665-0751 or Teka in the Mitchell area (605) 996-1140. You can also visit our website at www.districtiii.org/SBDC/. □



Sell, Sell, Sell!

This phrase reflects the emphasis of District III staff over the past few weeks with regard to the PrairieLand Housing Development (PHD) houses. We are very pleased to announce the completion of six of the eight homes. One of the homes in Plankinton and one in Alexandria have already been sold, and there are "serious buyers" looking at a home in White Lake and the remaining home in Plankinton. The Emery houses are ninety percent complete with exterior flatwork and final grading remaining. We anticipate they will be finished within the next thirty days.

(Story continues on the next page.)



PHD house that was recently sold in Plankinton

(PHD continued...)

We are continuing our efforts to market and sell the homes as soon as they are available for occupancy. While there has been considerable interest shown in the homes, we have discovered that there are also some limitations associated with the eligibility requirements. The funding program utilized to finance construction of the properties has fairly narrow income limitations, thereby eliminating many of our potential buyers. The most significant barrier has been the maximum allowable household income.

We are optimistic about the impact of placing PHD homes in participating communities. The PHD Board of Directors and District III are committed to this project and will make whatever adjustments are necessary to ensure the next round of houses will utilize the best financing option available.

If you have questions about PHD, please call Eric at the District III office or visit our website at www.districtiii.org/phd.

Sanborn County Effectively Implements a GIS

In 2004, Sanborn County officials were among the first in the region to decide to purchase ArcGIS (ArcView) software. County commissioners saw the potential benefit of developing a Geographic Information System (GIS) for the county, specifically for the Director of Equalization (DOE) office, and they decided to have District III develop a digital data layer that contains county parcel (land ownership) information. They realized they could utilize the GIS to produce a more exact assessment value of individual parcels. Before this software was implemented, the county had to literally count dots along every parcel to get a very rough estimate of the acreage of land for each soil type. This was a very time consuming and tedious process.

Once the parcel layer was nearly finished, the DOE purchased GIS Workshop's Custom Assessment Tools, which are designed for the unique editing functions of the assessment office. These tools enable the county to simplify and streamline the daily functions of the county assessor.

Examples of a few of the assessor tools:

Assessor Tools



This tool would help the assessor to do basic splits to the parcel (for example, say the land owner decides to sell the NW ¼).

CamaLink Tools



This tool allows the county to link the GIS Parcel layer to the Cama Package that the county is using, enabling the user to view all the information associated with the selected parcel. Cama information includes things like the owners name, address, property value, fire district, school district, etc.

Landuse Tool



This tool will allow the county to select a specific parcel and calculate the amount of acres of each soil type within that parcel. It will also display the GIS Acres or Deeded Acres associated with each parcel. This process takes only a few seconds and, in turn, saves the county hours – no more counting dots. Most importantly, this process helps to ensure the precision and accuracy of assessments.

Example of the Landuse Tool Printout

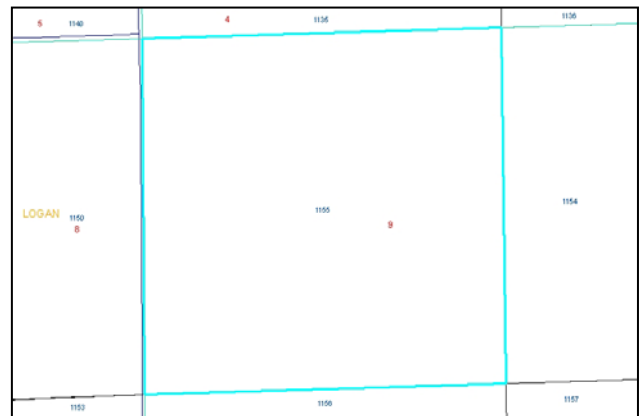
PARCEL ID: 0011550055

CURRENT OWNER: Travis Acklin

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: NW/4 SEC 9 009-106-61

Soil Code	Landuse	GIS Acres	Deeded Acres
Sb	CROP	16.100	15.864
Sa	CROP	12.033	11.856
Ea	CROP	67.772	66.778
Sa	ROAD	1.014	0.999
LdA	ROAD	0.586	0.578
LdA	CROP	12.420	12.238

Table continues...



The software will also print out the corresponding map.

District III GIS staff are nearly finished with the development of the Sanborn County parcel layer. Several other counties in District III have implemented a GIS and are also using GIS Workshop Tools. Those counties include Hanson, Lyman, Hutchinson, Bon Homme, Yankton, Brule, and Buffalo.

If you would like more information about GIS or Assessor Tools, please contact Harry or Travis at the District III Office, or visit our website at www.districtiii.org/GIS.

Lessons from LeadershipPlenty

In 2005, District III provided leadership training to Freeman, Gregory, and Lyman County through the LeadershipPlenty program. LeadershipPlenty was developed by the Pew Foundation and is designed to help communities identify local leaders and develop their individual abilities so they can be part of civic change. The program is based on the premise that all communities, regardless of size, already contain individuals with untapped talents and leadership potential.

Eric and John from District III facilitated nine sessions in each of the three communities. The sessions were interactive, featuring various leadership-building activities, and included ten to twenty people. The feedback from participants was very positive. Even though the communities are small, many of the participants had never met each other, and enjoyed working together. The group discussions were dynamic and helped to shed light on various local issues.



Photo: LeadershipPlenty session in Gregory

The relationships built by participants working together on problem-solving activities will benefit those communities in the long run. There has already been significant progress with the Lyman County group. They have decided to spearhead the formation of a countywide community foundation.

While the best possible scenario is that these sessions will produce tangible results in each community, at the very least the participants now have valuable new skills they can apply in their own lives and future community activities. □



Harry Redman, GIS Coordinator
Travis Acklin, GIS Specialist

AVAILABLE SERVICES:

Internet Mapping System <http://ims.districtiii.org>
Parcel Mapping
Plat Mapping
E911 Rural Addressing
Global Positioning System (GPS) Services
Geocoding (Address location like MapQuest)
GPS Sign Inventory for Highway/Road Department
Hazardous Materials (HazMat) Mapping
General GPS/GIS Mapping
GIS Training

(Missouri River Corridor continued...)

Christian Hornbaker, Director of the Nebraska Division of Travel and Tourism, and Billie Jo Waara, Director of the South Dakota Office of Tourism, ended the evening with their comments on the common goals of the two states, and the mutual benefit of finding new ways to work together across state boundaries.

The Missouri River Corridor Conference Committee would like to thank those organizations that worked together to make this conference a success.

For more information about the Missouri River Corridor, visit www.districtiii.org/corridor. □

Governor's House Program

The following guidelines are effective as of August 1st 2005:

- The price of the home is **\$33,000**
- Households of 2 OR LESS must have an income less than **\$34,900**.
- Households of 3 OR MORE must have an income less than **\$39,900**.
- Households UNDER 62 YEARS OF AGE must have a net worth less than **\$100,000**, of which no more than **\$70,000** may be in liquid assets.
- Households OVER 62 YEARS OF AGE must have a net worth less than **\$175,000**, of which no more than **\$100,000** may be in liquid assets.

To learn more about the Governor's House Program, call Eric at the District III office. □

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ORGANIZATION:

Planning & Development District III is a voluntary association of city and county governments. A committee of elected officials and private citizens govern the agency by setting the work agenda and overseeing the performance of the Director and staff. The office serves a 15-county area that includes the following counties: Aurora, Bon Homme, Brule, Buffalo, Charles Mix, Davison, Douglas, Gregory, Hanson, Hutchinson, Jerauld, Lyman, Sanborn, Tripp, and Yankton. There are 59 communities and three tribal governments within the service area.

*****If you would prefer to receive this publication via email, please contact our office.*****

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

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“Success is a lousy teacher. It seduces smart people into thinking they can’t lose.”

--Bill Gates