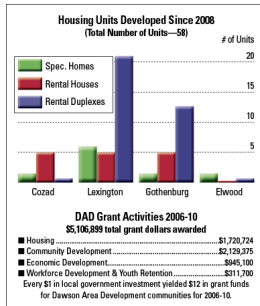


DAD branches out in duties to county

Written by Elizabeth Barrett

Thursday, 12 August 2010 21:26 -



Wolf presents annual report to city council.

Multi-tasking may be a better way these days to describe the work of Dawson Area Development.

DAD director Jen Wolf said the organization has added housing, grant writing, workforce recruitment and community development to its list of duties that, in the beginning, focused primarily on economic development.

Wolf shared DAD's annual report at the Aug. 3 meeting of the Gothenburg City Council.

Economic development key

DAD was organized in 1989 to promote unity and cooperation to affect development of the Dawson County area.

Membership includes all towns in Dawson County as well as communities from Gosper, Frontier and Buffalo counties.

Since the announcement that shock-absorber manufacturer Tenneco in Cozad would close the end of 2010, Wolf said DAD officials have worked to help their employees find other employment.

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“We have faith that the quality of our available workforce and excellent location will lead to the relocation of a new industry that will enhance our area economy,” she said.

DAD officials have hosted financial planning events and hiring fairs and continue to include employment opportunities on DAD’s website—www.dawsoncountycareers.com.

Wolf said there are weekly calls to the Nebraska Department of Labor and coordination with businesses across the county about available jobs and training needs.

Housing units up

Following a housing study and fair in 2008, she said 58 new units have been built in Dawson County with another project in the works in Lexington that may add 11 more.

With more of a focus on grant writing beginning in 2006, Wolf said \$5,106,899 has been awarded in grants in housing, community development, economic development and workforce development and youth retention.

“Every dollar in local government investment yielded \$12 in grant funds for Dawson area communities from 2006 to 2010,” she said.

Teacher internship new

Within DAD’s Advocating for Business Leadership Education program, Wolf said coordinator Mary Gohl received grant funds to create a two-week internship for teachers to learn on-the-job skills and develop curriculum to teach in the classroom.

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A focus in the future, Wolf said, will be facilitating entrepreneurship especially for small businesses.

In addition, DAD officials plan to assist more with business retention and expansion of existing industry.

“We will also look at existing industry trends and employment,” she said.

In other business, the council:

passed on second reading an ordinance that allows Terry’s Business Park—where Comfort Suites and a tax business is located—to collect an additional 1% sales tax on transactions in the park to pay for infrastructure.

approved on second reading an ordinance that vacates a portion of an easement between two lots on Cottonwood Drive in Gothenburg Industrial Park Second.

acknowledged receipt of a Gothenburg Airport Authority request for \$66,788 in budget funds for 2010-11.

voted to accept a \$206,080 federal grant for energy-efficient street lighting. The city’s share will be \$51,520 of the \$257,600 project that will replace existing street lights with light-emitting diode (LED) bulbs.

gave the thumbs up to the Harvest Festival parade route that begins at 20th Street and proceeds down Lake Avenue before turning right on Ninth Street.

City officials said increased regulations and insurance requirements are making it more difficult

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to use state highways for events.

decided to pay Schemmer Inc. \$6,857 for a transportation study the company is doing in Gothenburg.

gave the go ahead to draw down \$15,652 in funds for the downtown revitalization project.

granted Dick Day's request for a special license to serve alcohol during a wedding reception in the Central Platte Agronomics Inc. building.

learned that the city well, at the intersection of Avenue G and 16th Street, will be removed. The council decided not to use it anymore when federal higher-than-allowable levels of arsenic were found in the well.