

# **City of Scottsbluff, Nebraska**

**Monday, June 1, 2015**

**Regular Meeting**

## **Item Reports4**

**Council to authorize the Mayor to sign the grant application to the Department of Economic Development for the Civic and Community Center Financing Fund for downtown revitalization.**

**Staff Contact: Annie Folck, City Planner**

# Agenda Statement

Item No.

For meeting of: June 1, 2015

**AGENDA TITLE:** Council to authorize mayor to sign CCCFF grant application for Downtown Plaza project

**SUBMITTED BY DEPARTMENT/ORGANIZATION:** Planning and Zoning

**PRESENTATION BY:**

**SUMMARY EXPLANATION:** The Nebraska Department of Economic Development has a Civic and Community Center Financing Fund that awards grants of up to \$600,000 to cities of our size for projects including Community Centers, which they describe as "The traditional center of a community, typically comprised of a cohesive core of residential, civic, religious, and commercial buildings, arranged around a main street and intersecting streets. A community center is therefore an area of multiple buildings with both internal and external elements." This grant is a good fit for our downtown plaza project. The pre-application was approved and we have been invited to complete a full application which is due June 15<sup>th</sup>, and the announcement of grants awarded will be on or before June 30<sup>th</sup>.

**BOARD/COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION:**

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

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<b>EXHIBITS</b>				
Resolution <input type="checkbox"/>	Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/>	Contract <input type="checkbox"/>	Minutes <input type="checkbox"/>	Plan/Map <input type="checkbox"/>

Other (specify) ☒ Grant \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTIFICATION LIST:** Yes ☐ No ☒ Further Instructions ☐

**APPROVAL FOR SUBMITTAL:** \_\_\_\_\_  
City Manager

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**CIVIC AND COMMUNITY CENTER FINANCING FUND  
GRANT ASSISTANCE – 2015**

DED USE ONLY

**FINAL APPLICATION FORM**

**Part I.**

A	Name of Municipality:	City of Scottsbluff
B	Type of grant requested (check one)	<input type="checkbox"/> planning <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> capital construction
C	Grant amount requested*:	\$600,000
D	Facility is located within Municipality listed in Line A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes
E	Municipality listed in Line A will own facility	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes
F	Municipality listed in Line A will operate the facility	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes, skip to Line H <input type="checkbox"/> no, include an explanatory statement
G	Entity under contract that will operate the facility:	
H	Existing or preliminary name of facility:	Downtown Plaza
I	Type of facility (check one): <input type="checkbox"/> civic center <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community center <input type="checkbox"/> historic building <input type="checkbox"/> recreation center	
J	Proposed project has completed technical assistance and/or feasibility studies:	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no
K	Web address (if available):	scottsbluff.org

\*Must correspond to the appropriate amount based on population size as listed in the table on page 1 of the 2015 Application Guidelines.

☐ **ATTACHMENT ENCLOSED: Parts II-III** (This should be no more than 20 pages. Please review final application scoring criteria and be clear and concise with your project narrative. Supplemental maps, images, or photographs may be included, but limited to 4 additional pages.)

**PERSON PREPARING PRELIMINARY APPLICATION:**

NAME: Annie Folck  
ADDRESS: 2525 Circle Drive  
Scottsbluff, NE 69361  
PHONE: (308) 630-6244 E-MAIL: afolck@scottsbluff.org

**CHIEF ELECTED OFFICER OF MUNICIPALITY APPLYING FOR GRANT:**

NAME: Randy Meininger TITLE: Mayor

- ☒ The Facility in question is, or will be, owned and operated by the municipality.  
☒ The applicant has not received funding assistance from the Sports Arena Facility Financing Assistance Act.  
☒ The applicant has not been awarded a CCCFF grant within the last 5 grant years.

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

**RETURN COMPLETED FINAL APPLICATION FORM AND NARRATIVE (Parts I-III) TO:**

Jenny B. Mason, CCCFF Coordinator  
Nebraska Department of Economic Development  
P.O. 94666  
Lincoln, NE 68509-4666  
(402) 471-6280 | [jenny.mason@nebraska.gov](mailto:jenny.mason@nebraska.gov)

**APPLICATION DEADLINE: JUNE 15, 2015**

## Part II. Budget

A grant may be used for the construction of new centers or the renovation or expansion of existing centers. It may not be used for programming, marketing, advertising, and related activities. The grant may be used for site and infrastructure improvements directly related to the construction, renovation, or expansion of a center. It also may be used for the purchase and installation of fixed seating, lighting, carpeting, and other fixtures at a center, but not for temporary and/or portable furniture or equipment. The fund may also be used for preliminary planning related to the development or rehabilitation of eligible projects.

Grant assistance must be matched at least equally from local sources; and at least fifty percent of the local match must be in cash. Neither the local match nor the items listed for grant assistance should include amounts already spent prior to the date of this application for grant assistance. Following these guidelines, please fill in the table below, or provide a one-page attachment, showing the estimated line item costs for the project, broken down by the proposed funding sources (grant and match), plus the total amounts.

ESTIMATED PROJECT EXPENDITURES AND FUNDING SOURCES				
	LINE ITEM*	CCCCF portion	IN-KIND	CASH/OTHER*
A	Off-site improvements			\$80,000.00
B	Site improvements and Foundations	\$450,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$350,000.00
C	Exterior improvements			
D	Doors/Windows and Finishes			
E	Equipment and Furnishing			\$70,000.00
F	Mechanical	\$70,000.00		\$120,000.00
G	Electrical	\$80,000.00		\$80,000.00
H	Other (specify below)			\$200,000.00
TOTALS		\$600,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$900,000.00

\*A) Off-site improvements: grading, utilities, parking/sidewalks, etc.; B) Site improvements: excavation, footing/foundation, stonework, joists and girders, framing, etc.; C) Exterior improvements: thermal/moisture protection, roofing, insulation, siding, etc.; D) Doors/windows and finishes: drywall, tile, carpet, paint, etc.; E) Equipment and furnishings: bath/kitchen appliances, cabinets, fixed seating, etc.; F) Mechanical: heating, air conditioning, plumbing, etc.; G) Electrical: lighting, security system, fire detection, etc.; H) Other: all items not otherwise suited to items A-G.

\*\*Include other grant sources here and identify those sources below.

Please provide a description for line items listed under item H: Other (where applicable):

Landscaping and tree planting

Source(s) of other grant funds (where applicable):

The City is currently preparing a grant application to the Peter Kiewit Foundation, and will be continuing to look for other grant opportunities as they become available.

Proportion of cash/in-kind contributions may fluctuate depending on City department workloads. In-kind contributions used as match will not exceed \$300,000.

### **Part III. Project Narrative**

Provide the following information on a maximum of 20 separate (single-sided) sheets of paper behind Parts I and II, submitted materials will be clearly demarcated and in categorical order (A-F). All pages should be numbered at the bottom center.

Please review all items below prior to completing the application narrative. Each categorical criterion shall be reviewed and assigned a score of 0-10 points (60 points maximum).

**A. Retention Impact: provide data and/or an explanation of how the proposed project shall retain existing residents.**

*Funding decisions by the Department shall be based on the likelihood of the project retaining existing residents in the community where the project is located, developing, sustaining, and fostering community connections, and enhancing the potential for economic growth in a manner that will sustain the quality of life and promote long-term economic development;*

- *Tips for completing the project application narrative: describe a how the proposed project fulfills a known local need, based on a formal or informal assessment of current conditions.*

**B. New Resident Impact: describe the anticipated impact on new residents.**

*Funding decisions by the Department shall be based on the likelihood of the project attracting new residents to the community where the project is located.*

- *Tips: describe the unique and/or specific services or function to be provided as a result of project completion otherwise not available, specifically related to attracting new residents, include what services or functions would become available should the project be completed.*

**C. Visitor Impact: describe the anticipated impact on tourism and visitor attraction.**

*Funding decisions by the Department shall be based on the likelihood of the project enhancing or creating an attraction that would increase the potential of visitors to the community where the project is located from inside and outside the state.*

- *Tips: describe the unique and/or specific services or function to be provided as a result of project completion otherwise not available, specifically related to attracting visitors and/or tourists into the area.*

**D. Financial Support: describe and provide evidence of local financial support.**

*Assistance from the fund must include a 100% match (i.e. matched at least equally from local sources). At least fifty percent of the local match must be in cash. Preference shall be given to those projects with a higher level of local matching funds compared to those with a lower level of matching funds. Neither the local match nor the items listed for grant assistance should include amounts already expended prior to the date of application for grant assistance.*

- *Tips: describe project viability, leverages, and financial resources, as well as efforts to secure non-CCCFF monies from other state, federal, foundation, business, or individual sources.*

**E. Readiness and Local Public Support: describe and provide evidence of local public support.**

*The applicant's fiscal, economic, and operational capacity to finance and manage the project and ability of the applicant to proceed and implement its plan and operate the civic or community center.*

- *Tips: identify who will handle the day-to-day operation and management of the project, project roles, and established or potential partnerships, as well as any volunteer efforts. Include a summary and description of past and future projects and activities carried out at the local level, and identify partnerships and volunteer efforts. Provide a summary or other evidence of public support in the form of public meetings, design charrettes, fundraising campaigns, etc.*

**F. Project Planning: describe and provide evidence of planning efforts in support of the project.**

*Projects with completed technical assistance and feasibility studies at the community- or area-wide level shall be preferred to those with no prior planning.*

- *Tips: describe the level of design or conceptualization of the project, who was involved, historical preservation consideration (where appropriate), etc. Including a planning process timetable that would further illustrate the planning process, as well as a timeline for project implementation, including securing matching funds.*
- *Note: when applying for **planning grants**, please provide any information about initial planning, stakeholder and/or public meetings, as well as a summary of comprehensive planning that may have been conducted at the project area or community level. When a comprehensive plan has recommended the proposed project, please provide a hyperlink or electronic copy of the entire comprehensive plan and indicate the specific location(s) of those recommendations.*

## **Introduction**

Downtown Revitalization has been a priority of the City of Scottsbluff since 2009, when the Downtown Revitalization Task Force was established. This task force was awarded a \$30,000 planning grant, which was used to create a Downtown Master Plan. The task force then utilized a \$350,000 implementation grant to enact some of the suggestions of the Downtown Master Plan, primarily focusing on façade improvements. One of the suggestions of the Master Plan that was not implemented at that time was the redevelopment of the Farmer's Market site as a community gathering area. This is the project that will be the focus of the CCCFF grant.

The City of Scottsbluff currently has a "mini-park" and parking lot where the Farmers Market meets on Saturdays. The original Downtown Master Plan suggested improving this area to include public bathrooms and canopies to capitalize on the success of the Farmers Market. A few canopies were built, but the project was much smaller in scope than what had been suggested. A Downtown Streetscape Master Plan completed in 2014 built on this concept, going so far as to suggest closing off 18<sup>th</sup> Street between Broadway and the alley, increasing the amount of space available for landscaping and to create a multi-functional community gathering space. Following the completion of this plan, the City was urged to pursue the concept by the Downtown Business Improvement District (BID) Board, made up of seven downtown business owners.

As City staff considered the area and how it could be improved to create a downtown gathering area, it came to our attention that the only two buildings that front on 18<sup>th</sup> Street on that block were for sale. The City decided to purchase those two buildings, which, when combined with the adjacent City-owned parking lot, effectively doubled the size of the downtown gathering area. The properties were purchased on April 7, 2015, and with this addition, the City now has about one acre of space available in the heart of the downtown to build into a plaza (see attached map and site plan).

### **A. Retention Impact**

The location of the gathering space is ideal; it is situated between two downtown cultural resources, the Western Nebraska Arts Center and the Midwest Theater. It is also located adjacent to Broadway, the main street through Downtown. This area has the potential to become a great attraction for the downtown and the community, building on the success of the aforementioned organizations. The Midwest Theater drew over 40,000 people to downtown Scottsbluff in 2014. Creating an outdoor venue with a stage would create an opportunity for more performances, and performances of a different nature, which in turn would attract more people to the downtown. The Midwest Theater and the West Nebraska Arts Center have both looked for opportunities to arrange outdoor events in the past, but have never had a suitable venue in close proximity to their facilities. Both organizations would be

encouraged to utilize this space as much as possible for cultural events that will enhance the quality of life for area residents.

Scottsbluff is also fortunate to have a very successful Farmer's Market that currently meets downtown. Previous downtown studies have found that many residents believe that the Farmer's Market is one of the most valued events in the community. The 18<sup>th</sup> Street Farmer's Market commonly has twenty or more vendors and has indicated to the City that if their facilities could be improved by the addition of more shade structures, power outlets, seating, and public bathrooms, it would help them to be even more successful.

The NEXT Young Professionals is another local organization that strongly supports the development of the Downtown Plaza (see attached letter of support). NEXT currently hosts an annual Beer and Wine Fest in the mini-park, and would appreciate the enhanced facilities for that event. The organization has also indicated that they are excited about the possibility of a gathering space for events like outdoor movies, concerts, and other special events as well as a space for family friendly activities such as an indoor/outdoor playground and ice skating rink. It is the City's hope that creating such a space will enhance our ability to retain young professionals who desire to live in areas where such entertainment options are available.

## **B. New Resident Impact**

The City of Scottsbluff is currently very fortunate to have numerous job opportunities available for residents. However, many of the employers in the area are struggling to fill certain positions. This is not an issue that is unique to Scottsbluff; as communities compete for workforce and jobs become harder to fill, employees become a commodity. The communities that have extra amenities that enhance a person's quality of life will be the ones that are able to recruit and retain a quality workforce. The proposed Downtown Plaza for the City of Scottsbluff will become an essential part of the community's fabric that attracts an employee and gives them a sense of place. It is essential to create a venue for ongoing activities and social gathering opportunities.

## **C. Visitor Impact**

The Downtown Plaza Project has been very well supported by Scotts Bluff County Visitors Bureau because of its potential to attract visitors to the area (see attached letter of support). According to their director, downtown areas are making a comeback across the country as attractions for visitors. An attractive, vibrant, and active downtown can help create experiences for visitors by enabling them to enjoy concerts, art shows, and other events in a setting that is unique to our area.

The Visitors Bureau is also focusing on attracting younger families and millennials to the area, and it has become apparent in recent years that these demographics are very attracted to areas that have public squares in which to gather. In the Scottsbluff/Gering area, there are very few attractions for visitors in

the evening and early night hours. A well-programmed downtown plaza would offer numerous entertainment opportunities for visitors and residents alike.

The other goal of the Downtown Plaza project is to encourage private investment in the downtown. There are already a few restaurants, coffee shops, specialty stores, and an art gallery in the near vicinity, and the goal of a vibrant and active plaza would be to encourage more restaurants with outdoor dining, specialty retail, and other related attractions. This would help create a critical mass of visitor-oriented establishments, and with enough attractions to keep people in the downtown longer, visitors would be more inclined to come from a greater distance.

#### **D. Financial Support**

The City has already invested \$435,376 in purchasing property for this Downtown Plaza. While the City understands that funds already invested cannot be used as a match for the CCCFF grant, it is our belief that the amount already invested in this project helps demonstrate the City's commitment to making this a successful project. The City is also committed to matching the CCCFF grant funds. Additionally, the City is looking into other avenues to allow local residents and companies to contribute to the project. The City is tentatively planning on submitting a grant on July 15<sup>th</sup> to the Peter Kiewit Foundation. The Foundation will consider funding up to 25% of a project, and will notify grant applicants of their award decisions by September 30<sup>th</sup>. The City will also continue to look for other grant opportunities as they become available.

#### **E. Readiness and Local Public Support**

The project will be overseen by Annie Folck, the City of Scottsbluff Planner. She will be responsible for arranging public meetings, communicating with City Council, meeting with stakeholders such as the Business Improvement District (BID) board, Downtown Scottsbluff Association, Farmers Market, NEXT Young Professionals, Midwest Theater, West Nebraska Arts Center, and others, and working with the engineers on the project design. Dave Schaff, with MC Schaff and Associates, will be the project manager in charge of overseeing design and construction.

Once the project is complete, day-to-day operation will be taken over by Perry Mader, Parks and Recreation Director for the City of Scottsbluff. The plaza will be owned and operated by the City, but is expected to be utilized by several different groups, especially the Midwest Theater and the West Nebraska Arts Center. Both of these entities have expressed their interest in utilizing this space to further their own missions of increasing cultural offerings to area residents. This space will also continue to serve as the venue for the 18<sup>th</sup> Street Farmers Market, which has been a very successful weekly event in the summer for several years now.

Previous downtown revitalization projects have been very well supported by the community. As part of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) that was awarded to the downtown in 2010, there were 45 downtown business and property owners that participated in the grant to renovate their



buildings. Several organizations assisted the Downtown Revitalization Task Force in gathering public feedback, planning, and implementing the CDBG process, including the Downtown Scottsbluff Association, the 18<sup>th</sup> Street Farmers Market, KNEB Radio, KOTA Television, the Star-Herald newspaper, the Midwest Theater, NEXT Young Professionals, Oregon Trail Community Foundation, Scottsbluff/Gering United Chamber of Commerce, and Twin Cities Development.

The City of Scottsbluff was also selected as a Greener Nebraska Towns (GNT) Initiative Community by the Nebraska Forest Service and Nebraska Statewide Arboretum in 2011. The goal of this initiative was to create more attractive, livable, and viable communities by encouraging sustainable landscaping practices in an urban area, resulting in “greener, cleaner, more sheltered communities.” The community was extremely supportive of this initiative, and as a result several landscaping projects have been installed in the downtown. These projects utilized native and well-adapted plants to create landscape areas that break up the hot, harsh surfaces of parking lots and streets (see before and after photos in attachment). Trees planted as part of this initiative will eventually help cool the downtown, making it a more pleasant environment for visitors. As part of the initiative, volunteers from the Chamber of Commerce Valley Visions Committee, Scottsbluff High School, and the UNL Master Gardeners helped with the installation of these projects. The Oregon Trail Community Foundation and the Business Improvement District also contributed funds to these projects.

Following the success of the GNT Initiative, the City was asked to apply for a 319 grant through the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality. The City was awarded funds for the removal of impervious surfaces in downtown parking lots to create sustainable landscapes that would capture and infiltrate stormwater. Several trees were planted in these areas, and as these trees mature, other environmental benefits of the project will be realized including: reducing the heat island effect, improving air quality, and reducing noise pollution. As a result of that project, the City has removed more than 8,000 square feet of concrete from downtown parking lots and replaced it with landscaping, which has greatly improved the aesthetics of the downtown. Volunteers with Scottsbluff High School, Community Christian School, the UNL Master Gardeners, and NEXT Young Professionals have helped with those plantings.

Scottsbluff’s Downtown was recently designated by the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum as an affiliated arboretum. Because of this designation, landscaping and tree plantings will be an integral part of the Downtown Plaza project. The City will continue to identify and apply for grants that will support our efforts to create a landscape in the Plaza that will evoke a strong sense of place while serving as an oasis in a harsh urban environment. A strong landscape design utilizing plants native to the area along with a few well-adapted non-natives can help the Plaza to feel truly unique to Western Nebraska and will tie in well with the plantings that have already been installed throughout the downtown. This will also be an excellent opportunity to demonstrate best management practices for urban landscapes. Trees in particular tend to struggle to survive in an urban environment, and it is our hope that by utilizing the best management practices as recommended by the Nebraska Forest Service and Nebraska Statewide Arboretum, we can extend the longevity of their lives.

The City also continues to implement the suggestions of previously prepared master plans, and as part of those efforts will be installing curb extensions to improve the pedestrian network. These curb extensions, also called bump outs, will increase pedestrian and motorist visibility, reduce street crossing distances, increase motorist to motorist visibility, and calm traffic by reducing the perceived width of the street. The bump outs will also provide additional space for landscaping; the Downtown Streetscape Master Plan, completed in 2014, calls for street trees to be programmed within the intersection bump-outs. According to this plan, street trees at intersection nodes will form intermittent gateways to each successive block face, enhancing a sense of progression as one moves along Broadway, which is the defining corridor of the Scottsbluff downtown. The bump outs, complete with landscaping, are scheduled to be completed in the near future.

## **F. Project Planning**

The potential for this project was first described in the Scottsbluff Downtown Master Plan by Urban Development Services, completed in 2011. This plan grew out of the efforts of the Downtown Task Force, an outgrowth of the Chamber of Commerce. This Task Force consisted of volunteers representing various groups including downtown business owners, development specialists, educators, entrepreneurs, city government representatives, rural development organizations, and interested citizens. To identify the needs of the community, the Task Force held a series of one-on-one stakeholder interviews, community meetings, and presentations. They also developed an in-depth online survey that was open to the general public. This survey was linked to the websites of KNEB, the Star-Herald, and KOTA TV, was disseminated through the members of both Scottsbluff Gering United Chamber of Commerce and Twin Cities Development, and was given to students of Western Nebraska Community College.

The 2011 Master Plan noted that the Farmers Market is a huge asset to Downtown Scottsbluff, drawing between 20 and 30 vendors each week. It also noted that many of the participants in their community input process commented that they wish the site was more of an asset to the market and the community. The Master Plan suggested installing a new building that would include public bathrooms and an information kiosk, with a patio area filled with tables and chairs to encourage outdoor dining. It also suggested additional tree planting and canopies to provide shade for events, with decorative gates to help restrict vehicle access on event days. The plan called for permanent poles to be installed onto which canopies could be put up and taken down for events.

After considering the suggestions of the Master Plan, it was determined that putting up and taking down canopies for every event would be difficult operationally, since most events occur outside of the City's normal working hours. Instead, a permanent canopy was constructed, and due to limited funds, none of the other suggestions of the Master Plan were pursued at that time. The canopy that was constructed has been well-utilized by the Farmers Market; in fact, the limited space under the canopy is coveted by vendors. This indicated to the City that there is a need for additional shade structures and tree planting to continue to improve this facility. The City has also continued to receive public input that there is still a need for public bathrooms in the space. While a public bathroom was installed downtown as part of

the original Downtown Revitalization Grant, it is over a block away from the space, and only accommodates one person at a time, so is not ideal for events.

The Master Plan made several additional suggestions about landscaping and improving the pedestrian network. To follow up on these suggestions, the City had a Downtown Streetscape Master Plan completed in 2014. In order to gain input for the Streetscape Master Plan, a public engagement open house followed by a single day design charrette were held at the Midwest Theater in January of 2014. The designers then utilized the information gathered from this public dialog to develop a preliminary Streetscape Master Plan, which was presented to the public for review and comment in February of that year. After addressing the feedback that was received at the February presentation and finalizing the plan, the Streetscape Master Plan was presented to City Council in March 2014. All of the opportunities for public input were well publicized by local media (television, radio, and newspaper), and several follow up news stories described the information presented in the meetings for those unable to attend.

The Streetscape Master Plan included landscape design for curb extensions and block faces, as well as some conceptual ideas for the 18<sup>th</sup> Street Farmers Market facilities. This plan looked at expanding the scope of the facility to not only accommodate the Farmers Market, but to become a destination location within the urban core of the community. This plan suggested closing off 18<sup>th</sup> Street between Broadway and the alley in order to create a permanent space that would not have to be blocked off with temporary barricades during an event. This would also allow for more landscaping and permanent fixtures to be incorporated into the area.

Building on the suggestions of both Master Plans, the City has now purchased two properties on 18<sup>th</sup> Street, allowing for the closure of 18<sup>th</sup> from Broadway to 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue. This creates about a one-acre space that will be used to enhance the Farmers Market facilities, with the installation of additional canopies, tree planting, and public bathrooms. A stage will be added to facilitate performance-related events, along with additional seating in the form of benches or raised planter beds. The City will also be considering adding amenities such as fire pits, an indoor/outdoor play space, and a synthetic ice rink to create a family-friendly event space that can be utilized year round. These amenities will be prioritized based on public input, and if necessary, may be added to the project in later phases.

The planning process for the project has been as follows:

**December 2009-** The Downtown Revitalization Task Force was established as a response to a study that concluded that 72% of the downtown buildings were blighted and substandard, and that 20% of the downtown buildings were vacant.

**January-February 2010-** Volunteers utilized data from past economic development initiatives, garnered citizen involvement, and leveraged financial support to strategically plan and implement improvements.

**March 2010-** An in-depth online survey was launched, generating 829 responses which were used to prioritize direction and allocation of resources

**June 2010-** City of Scottsbluff awarded a \$30,000 planning grant to support the development efforts of the Task Force, followed by a \$350,000 implementation grant (Community Development Block Grant). This funding was utilized to develop the 2011 Downtown Master Plan by Urban Development Services.

**May 2011-June 2013-** Over \$1,000,000 is invested in the Downtown as a result of the Community Development Block Grant, with over \$900,000 in grant funds and private investment going towards building renovations. During the same time period, several landscaping projects were completed through the Nebraska Forest Service/Nebraska Statewide Arboretum's Greener Nebraska Towns Initiative. As a result of this initiative, over \$80,000 was invested in downtown landscaping.

**April 2013 – July 2013-** Broadway, the main street through Downtown, is resurfaced from Railway north to 27<sup>th</sup> Street, a distance of over 13 blocks. Traffic lanes on Broadway are reconfigured from two lanes in each direction to one lane each direction with a center turn lane. During this process the parallel parking was changed to angled parking and traffic lights at four intersections were eliminated to improve traffic flow. The reduction in traffic lanes has served to make the downtown much more pedestrian friendly.

**January 2014-** Open House and Design Charrette held for the Downtown Streetscape Master Plan

**February 2014-** Preliminary Downtown Streetscape Master Plan presented to public for review and feedback

**March 2014-** Finalized Downtown Streetscape Master Plan presented to City Council. Plan includes suggestions to create a dedicated event space on 18<sup>th</sup> Street.

**May 2014-** The City's Business Improvement District (BID) Board, comprised of business and property owners in the downtown, makes formal recommendation to Council to continue to research the possibility of closing down a portion of 18<sup>th</sup> Street for the creation of a downtown plaza.

**January 2015-** The possibility of purchasing the two properties along 18<sup>th</sup> Street is presented to the BID board. The board makes a positive recommendation to Council to purchase the properties and continue developing the Downtown Plaza concept.

**March 16, 2015-** City Council considers and approves the purchase of properties for the creation of Downtown Plaza contingent on Public Hearings to be held on April 6.

**April 6, 2015-** Public Hearing held at City Council Meeting to consider the purchase of properties for the creation of Downtown Plaza.

**April 7, 2015-** The City purchases properties for the creation of the Downtown Plaza.

**June 2, 2015-** Open House held at the Midwest Theater to receive public input on proposed amenities for space.

The tentative implementation process for the project is as follows:

**June 30, 2015-** Department of Economic Development notifies grant applicants of award decisions

**July 15, 2015-** Grant submitted to Peter Kiewit Foundation for additional funding

**September 30, 2015-** Peter Kiewit Foundation notifies grant applicants of award decisions

**October 2015-** Preliminary Design Presentation to public to gain input on project design and phasing

**December 2015-** Final Design completed

**Spring 2016-**Begin construction

**Fall 2016-** Project completion, or if project is phased, Phase I completion

**Spring 2017-** If project is phased, begin construction of Phase II

**Fall 2017-** Phase II completion

## Downtown Scottsbluff Plaza: Conceptual Renderings

*Renderings Courtesy of Joseph R. Hewgley and Associates, Inc.*



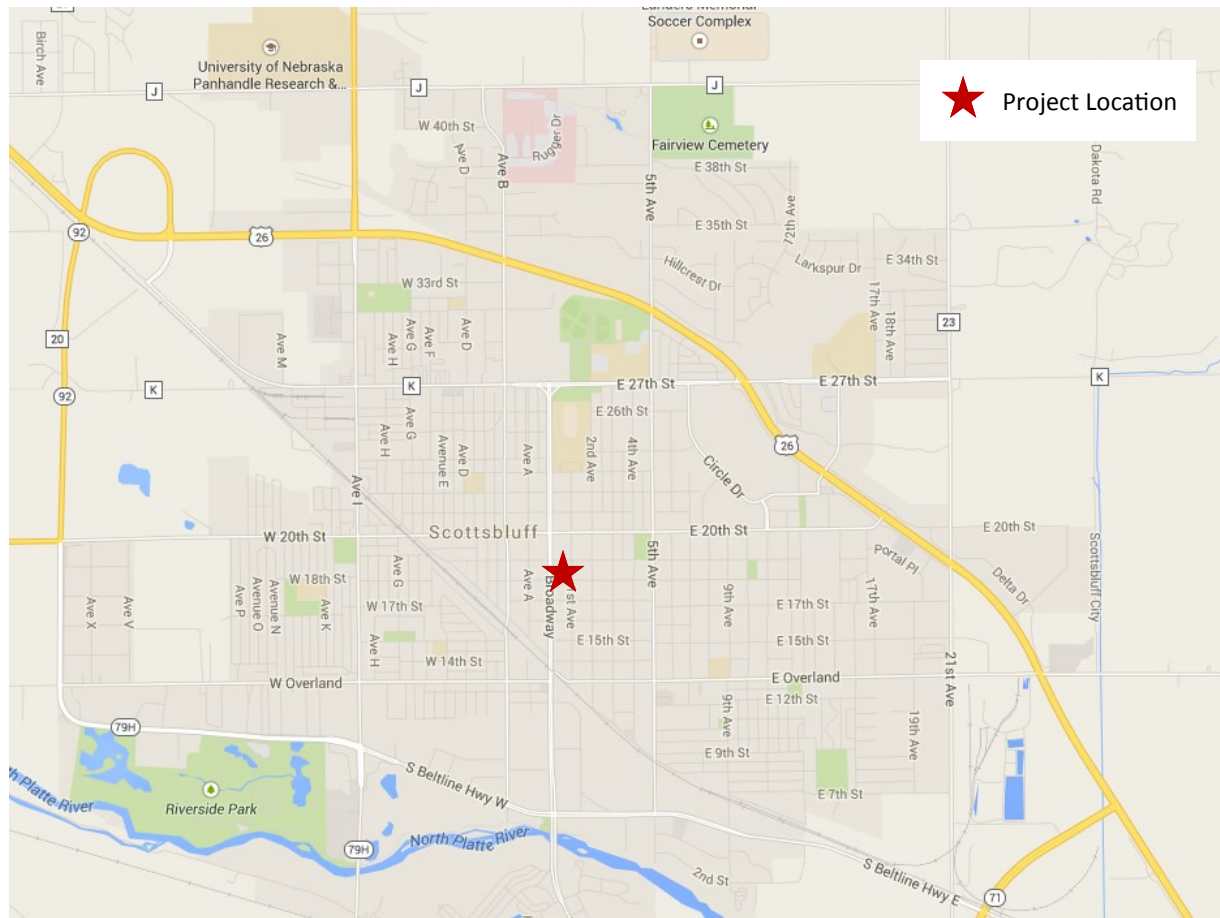
Clockwise from top right:  
Indoor/Outdoor playground and fire pits

Scenic walkway connecting 1st Avenue to Broadway

Overall site plan including stage, synthetic skating rinks, fire pits, indoor/outdoor playground, public bathrooms, landscaping, and gathering space for community events including the Farmers Market



## General Location Map



## Site Map

