



FINISHING THE CAPITOL COURTYARD GARDENS

THE CAPITOL COURTYARD GARDENS PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Nebraska Association of Former State Legislators is leading a \$1.4 million campaign to restore landscaping of the four courtyards inside the Nebraska State Capitol and establish an endowment to preserve those gardens.

When State government began using the Capitol in 1932, the building was incomplete as the interior courtyards had landscaping but no fountains. The State provided \$3.1 million for the fountains, which were installed and dedicated in 2017 during the Sesquicentennial celebration.

This project will provide funding for the restoration of the courtyard landscaping which has been missing since the 1960s due to lack of funds. The project includes irrigation and drainage systems, plantings and a \$1 million maintenance and ongoing care endowment.

Once the gardens are finished, Capitol Architect Bertram Goodhue's vision for the National Historic Landmark State Capitol will finally be realized and future generations of Nebraskans can enjoy these beautiful retreats for future years.

PARTNERSHIPS

Celebrating Nebraska Statehood Inc. is the fiscal agent for this project. This 501(c)(3) was formed in 2016 by First Lady Susanne Shore to support and promote events related to the celebration of Nebraska's 150th year of statehood and for subsequent anniversaries. Celebrating Nebraska Statehood is continuing to serve the people of Nebraska with various statewide initiatives, including this project.

The State of Nebraska is involved in the planning, installation and ongoing maintenance. The State is acting through the Nebraska Capitol Commission and its Office of the Capitol Administrator, headed by Robert Ripley.

PROJECT COST: \$1.4 million includes plantings, installation, drainage and irrigation systems and a \$1 million care and maintenance endowment.

CAMPAIGN TEAM: Former Senators DiAnna Schimek (Chair), Tom Carlson, Jim Jensen, Joel Johnson, Vickie McDonald, Scott Moore, John Nelson, Sandy Scofield and Bob Wickersham

PROJECT ADVISOR: Robert Ripley, Capitol Administrator

WEBSITE: NE150.org/Courtyards

CAMPAIGN ORGANIZER: Susan Larson Rodenburg, SLR Communications, 402-440-3227 or Susan@SLRCommunications.com

**LANCASTER COUNTY VISITORS IMPROVEMENT FUND
GRANT REQUEST**

Name of Organization: The name of the 501(c)(3) for this project is Celebrating Nebraska Statehood Inc. Celebrating Nebraska Statehood Inc. is acting as fiscal agent for the Nebraska Association of Former State Legislators, which is leading a \$1.4 million campaign for the Capitol Courtyard Gardens. Celebrating Nebraska Statehood Inc., (Celebrating) was formed in 2016 by First Lady Susanne Shore to support and promote events related to the celebration of Nebraska's 150th year of statehood and for subsequent anniversaries. Celebrating is continuing to serve the people of Nebraska with various statewide initiatives, one of which is its collaboration with the Association. Celebrating is acting as the fiscal agent for this project and is providing web and administrative support.

The Nebraska Association of Former State Legislators is leading the planning and fundraising, will issue and monitor performance of a contract for installation of the gardens with oversight by the Nebraska Capitol Commission and Capitol Administrator Bob Ripley and will establish an endowment for the perpetual maintenance of the gardens after installation.

Unless otherwise specified all information in this application applies to the Nebraska Association of Former State Legislators and this project.

Contact Person: DiAnna Schimek, Campaign Leader

Address/City/State/Zip: 6437 Lone Tree Dr., Lincoln, NE 68512

Telephone: 402-423-0262 Email dschimek7@gmail.com

Organization Status: Non-Profit

Celebrating Nebraska Statehood Inc. is a non-profit, 501 (c) (3), Tax ID 47-4867912, established in 2016 by First Lady Susanne Shore.

Applicant Government/organization Federal ID number: 47-3867912 (Celebrating Nebraska Statehood Inc.)

If tax exempt organization, designate IRS classification: 501(c)(3) (Celebrating Nebraska Statehood Inc.)

Provide a detailed description of your exhibit/attraction: The Nebraska Association of Former State Legislators is collaborating with Celebrating Nebraska Statehood and the State of Nebraska, acting through the Nebraska Capitol Commission, to raise \$1.4 million to restore landscaping of the four courtyards inside the Nebraska State Capitol and build an endowment to preserve those gardens.

When State government began using the Capitol in 1932, the building was incomplete as the interior courtyards had landscaping but no fountains. The State provided \$3.1 million for the fountains which were installed and dedicated in 2017 during the Sesquicentennial celebration. This project will provide funding for the restoration of the landscaping inside the Capitol courtyards which has been missing since the 1960s due to lack of funds. The project includes irrigation and drainage systems, plantings and a \$1 million maintenance and ongoing care endowment. Once the gardens are finished, Capitol Architect Bertram Goodhue's vision for the National Historic Landmark State Capitol will finally be realized and this historic, unique attraction will provide a compelling new reason for people to visit Lincoln and tour the State Capitol.

Number of attendees estimated: Out of town 72,000 Local 48,000 (annually)

Check all that apply:

- Expanding and improving any existing visitor attraction.
- Planning or developing such expansion improvements, exhibits or additions.
- Acquiring or expanding exhibits for existing visitor attractions.
- Promotion and advertising costs associated with such exhibits.
- New Construction

Please describe project as indicated above.

- **An Opportunity to Complete the Vision for our State Capitol:** The Capitol Courtyard Gardens project was initiated in 2017 by the Nebraska Association of Nebraska Former State Legislators, which was established to include all former senators and to undertake projects for the benefit of Nebraskans. Campbell’s Nurseries of Lincoln and the Big Muddy Workshop of Omaha updated the original landscape plan developed in 1933 by architect Ernst Herminghaus (who also designed Pioneers Park) to include newly developed, hardier varieties that will survive in a changing climate. Although similar in overall plant layout and border design, the flower beds in each courtyard are distinctly different in color palette, with a series of taller shrubs and small trees against the building, and low-growing hedges along the interior sidewalks. Each courtyard will have its own unique mix of colorful plants that includes tulips, petunias, roses, lilacs, hydrangeas and other varieties. The landscaping will put the finishing touches on the Nebraska State Capitol, a National Historic Landmark.
- **An Opportunity for Partnering and Economic Impact to Lancaster County:** Now that the State has provided the resources for the fountains, all that is needed is to restore the courtyard gardens. Support from Lancaster County will boost our ability to leverage support from private sources across the state and result in a substantial public-private partnership with enormous public benefit and economic impact to the area.
- **Expands Tourism Potential:** The finished gardens will be a new attraction for all Capitol visitors, garden clubs and others. This project will complete the vision of the Capitol architect and create an incredible, rare enhancement of one of Lincoln’s top tourism attractions.

Project Start Date: 4/01/2018 Completion Date: 6/01/2026

Is this project part of a larger renovation project? YES

If yes, please describe the entire project:

The courtyard gardens are the missing pieces of the original Capitol design. The Nebraska Association of Former State Legislators championed a \$3.1 million State appropriation for installation of the courtyard fountains in 2017. However, the State cannot commit additional funds to restore the landscaping or to maintain the courtyards at this time. The Herminghaus-designed Capitol landscape, which includes the courtyards and the exterior landscape, is part of the Nebraska State Capitol’s official designation as a National Historic Landmark. Of the buildings nationally designated as National Historic Landmarks, it is rare to find both the building and its landscape so designated. The restoration of the courtyard gardens and the establishment of an endowment fund to ensure that the courtyards remain beautiful forever is the last step in a 30-year effort to complete and restore the Capitol as envisioned by architect Bertram Goodhue and others. Our National Landmark State Capitol is a top tourism attraction in Lincoln and Lancaster County.

As it pertains to the grant related project, provide breakdowns of radio and television advertising, showing individual costs, call letters and cities of origin. Also give breakdowns of magazine advertising by individual publications and costs. Similarly, separate the costs for brochures, travel shows by location, billboard advertising, etc. Include target market demographics.

Since the State Capitol is a public building, there is no charge for visitors. The State Capitol currently attracts nearly

100,000 visitors and a wide variety of tours each year without using state tax funds to promote it as a tourist attraction. However, once the gardens are completed, a free, public open house with a statewide news release and other free publicity will be planned and promoted to create greater awareness of these new, unique attractions inside the State Capitol. It is anticipated that the completion of the courtyards will result in additional coverage by Nebraska Educational Television (which featured the new courtyards in a “Nebraska Stories” segment), Nebraska newspapers, TV and radio stations. We plan to pitch a feature in Nebraska Life and Midwest Living, and the idea to include the courtyard gardens as a Nebraska Passport Destination. The gardens will become part of the Capitol guided tours, as well as information provided about the Capitol. A marketing plan and budget is attached.

Do you anticipate submitting future applications for projects relating to this project? NO

Total projected budget (attach detailed budget)

Total Revenue: \$1,402,778

Total Expense: \$1,402,778

How will your project impact new visitor recruitment and lodging tax revenues?

1. **Enhances a Top Tourism Attraction in Lancaster County:** The State Capitol’s Courtyard Gardens will provide a unique attraction and additional recruitment tool for the CVB to use when promoting bus tours, recruiting conventions and other events to Lincoln, or advertising Lincoln as a stopover on a cross country trip, resulting in increased lodging tax revenues. During the legislative session, leadership groups, commercial clubs, business associations and others tour the Capitol as part of their visit. Other touring groups include visiting students and scholars from universities and state colleges, public and private, the Friendship Force, the Mayor’s Committee for International Friendship and senior citizen excursions. Most tours include 30-50 people with 2-3 adult groups per week.

The project will attract new visitors to the Capitol, as well as those who will be compelled to come again to see the courtyard gardens.

2. **Provides a Unique Promotional Opportunity:** Many people have “visit all 50 state capitols” on their bucket list. Those who have visited the Capitol will be interested in returning to see these unique gardens. It is rare to find such an enhancement in a State Capitol. In fact, research to date does not show any other comparable gardens in the country.

In addition, Nebraska’s immigrant communities bring their visiting families from Vietnam, Iraq, Japan, China, and Europe to the Capitol as it is a spectacular and free place to visit. Other groups from foreign countries visit the Capitol to study the Unicameral system.

3. **Expands Visitor Audiences:** Garden clubs are a special target audience to increase visits to the Capitol. The Capitol Courtyard Gardens can be packaged with other featured public garden sites in Lincoln such as the Sunken Gardens, Hamann Rose Garden, the gardens on UNL’s East Campus (Fleming Slope, Magdeline Pfister Iris Garden, Maxwell Arboretum, Old Mall Garden, The Porch & Old Rose Garden, Yeutter Garden) and the gardens on UNL’s City Campus (Andrews & Burnett Garden, Cather Garden, Donaldson Garden, Love Garden, Sheldon Garden).

The potential increased visitorship from local and regional garden clubs and individual gardeners is substantial. For example, there are 800 Master Gardeners in Nebraska and 85,000 nationwide. Trained by Land Grant Universities, Master Gardeners are connected to other gardeners in their communities and are easily reached through County Extension offices.

In addition to Master Gardeners, most states have Federated Garden Club chapters which are members of National Garden Clubs Inc. Nebraska has 16 clubs with a membership of 305. Iowa divides itself into eight districts and has 43 clubs. Kansas, Missouri, and South Dakota are also close enough to encourage garden clubs to visit the Capitol Gardens. All states have an annual convention and in addition there is a national convention. Garden clubs sponsor field trips and maintain websites which could be used to publicize the opportunity to visit the Capitol courtyard gardens in Lincoln. Colorado, Nebraska, Montana, Kansas, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming and Utah make up the Rocky Mountain Region, which is holding its annual meeting at Fort Robinson in August of 2018. Once the Capitol Courtyard Gardens are complete the opportunity will be enhanced for Lincoln to attract conventions or meetings of gardeners, arborists, landscapers, architects, historians, state officials and nursery owners as well as botanists and horticulturalists.

Estimated annual visitors: Local 48,000 Outside of Lincoln 72,000 (Based on estimates by Capitol staff.)

Estimated Annual economic impact of your facility and/or project based on lodging tax use:
(Using provided multipliers)

Additional 8,000 local visitors annually x \$245 local event= \$1.96 million

Additional 12,000 out of town visitors x \$350 state event = \$4.2 million

TOTAL Estimated Annual Economic Impact of the Capitol Courtyard Gardens: \$6.16 million*

*National/Regional event multiplier not used since Capitol staff does not distinguish between out of state and national/regional visitors.

Is this based on annual use of the facility or for a specific event/exhibition? The estimated annual economic impact of this project is based on the annual use of the Capitol as a tourist destination. During the Legislative session many Nebraskans come to hearings and to visit which also increases overnight stays. When the courtyard gardens are restored, Capitol staff anticipates a 20% increase in visitor activity because the State Capitol has a new attraction. People who love public gardens will be compelled to visit the Capitol and this rare new exhibit, as well as the City's Sunken Gardens and the Rose Gardens, and UNL's gardens on the City and East campuses. The Capitol Courtyard Gardens will be another reason to extend their visit. Even if only 6,000 (or 50%) of the estimated additional out of town visitors stay for one additional overnight it would translate into \$2.1 million annual impact and the total estimated annual economic impact of the courtyard gardens would be: **\$4.06 million**. In summary, Lincoln will be well positioned to offer unique opportunities for additional visitors.

Is this grant request in addition to other project related grant requests? Yes.

If yes, then list other grant requests: Fundraising prospects include members of the NE Association of Former State Legislators, individuals, corporations and foundations in Nebraska. We have submitted grant proposals to entities across the state. Our initial emphasis has been on asking former senators to contribute \$1,000 each to the project. The response has been very positive. Current senators will soon be asked to contribute. We plan to solicit foundations in Omaha this fall, an effort led by former Sen. Scott Moore who is President of the Union Pacific Foundation.

Grant amount requested from Visitors Promotion Committee: \$200,000

Signature of Applicant _____

Date _____

Nebraska Capitol Courtyard Gardens Project				
Four Courtyards: Budget of Expenditures				
Updated: 5-7-18				
Irrigation Systems				
Mixed Sprinkler and Drip			\$59,000	
Irrigation total				\$59,000
Areas Inside Walkways				
Prepare areas for renovation			\$64,400	
Prepare areas for Installation			\$40,600	
Installation of plants				
Privet 1,600 plants	\$48,000			
Roses 4 varieties 404 plants	\$15,300			
Petunias 1,096 plants	\$7,900			
Tulips 4,384 plants	\$3,900			
Sod	\$6,300			
Mulch		\$5,100		
Labor		\$4,200		
Fees		\$7,900		
Inside Walkways totals before discount	\$81,400	\$17,200	\$105,000	\$203,600
Campbell's discount				-\$42,200
Inside Walkways discounted total				\$161,400
Areas Outside Walkways				
Prepare areas for Renovation			\$7,500	
Prepare areas for Installation			\$22,100	
Installation of plants				
Privet 203 plants	\$6,100			
no privets outside walkway	-\$4,000			
Plum 16 plants	\$50			
Lilac 6 varieties 24 plants	\$2,500			
Mockorange 3 varieties 64 plants	\$3,800			
Fringetree 8 plants	\$1,200			
Weigella 2 colors 8 plants	\$600			
Viburnum 2 varieites 12 plants	\$1,200			
Althea 3 varieties 12 plants	\$1,400			
Desmodium 32 plants	\$1,900			
Potentilla 56 plants	\$3,400			
Rose 24 plants	\$1,400			
Sobaria 28 plants	\$1,500			
Spirea 2 varieties 96 plants	\$5,000			
Kerria 20 plants	\$1,800			
Rosa 4 varieties 100 plants	\$6,200			
St Johnswort 28 plants	\$1,900			
Quince 24 plants	\$2,200			
Kolkwitzia 24 plants	\$1,300			
Burning Bush 24 plants	\$2,200			
Viburnum 24 plants	\$1,400			
Hydrangea 2 varieties 172 plants	\$17,500			
Sweetshrub 12 plants	\$1,200			
Summersweet 48 plants	\$5,000			
Mulch		\$2,200		
Labor		\$1,400		
Fees		\$4,900		
Outside Walkways totals before discount	\$66,750	\$8,500	\$29,600	\$104,850
Campbell's discount				-\$25,443
Outside Walkways discounted total				\$79,407
Irrigation and Plants Installation Total Discounted				\$299,807
Contingency 15% (10 yr project first work 2020)				\$44,971
Fundraising fees and costs				\$58,000
Preservation endowment to provide \$40,000 per year for maintenance of perennials and replacement of annuals (Any cost savings will accrue to endowment)				\$1,000,000
Initiative Total				\$1,402,778
NOTE	Sales tax will be payable on purchase of live plants and sod. Taxation of other items, such as mulch and irrigation system, to be determined. Due to uncertainties concerning rates and items subject to tax, sales tax is estimated at \$10,000 to \$15,000 but not included in budget.			