

# NEWS RELEASE

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### CONTACT

Josh Charvat  
Cass County Nebraska Economic Development Council  
402.978.7909  
JCharvat@CCNEDC.com

## Cass County Nebraska Economic Development Council Celebrates Foundation Laid, Looks to Future Growth at Annual Meeting

**Cass County, NE** – The Cass County Nebraska Economic Development Council (CCNEDC) held its annual meeting on February 13, 2025 at Round the Bend Steakhouse, highlighting significant progress made in 2024 and outlining ambitious plans for future growth. The event brought together community leaders, business owners, and stakeholders to celebrate accomplishments and discuss strategies for continued economic development in Cass County.

CCNEDC Executive Director Josh Charvat opened the meeting by emphasizing the organization’s focus on building a strong foundation in 2024. Key achievements included the completion of Cass County’s first-ever County-wide Housing Study, which identified a need for 615 new housing units over the next five years, and the identification of two new development sites totaling 110 acres. The council also facilitated increased collaboration among communities and organizations reporting that over 150 individuals actively participated in CCNEDC’s initiatives throughout the year.

The Housing Study revealed key challenges such as affordability, aging infrastructure, and utility constraints, while also highlighting opportunities including steady population growth and employer demand. Single family residential building permits saw a slight increase in 2024 but remained below the demand level outlined by the housing study, while commercial permit valuations, following a record year in 2023, returned to more typical levels. Cass County continues to experience steady population growth, exceeding 27,500 residents, and saw a solid increase in its labor force.

Looking forward to 2025 and beyond, Charvat announced the CCNEDC’s focus on “going vertical,” bringing visible and tangible change to the community. Key initiatives include:

- **Water & Wastewater Analysis:** Partnering with the 6 Regions 1 Nebraska initiative to analyze water and wastewater needs across the county to address development constraints.
- **Housing Action Committee:** Convening a committee to implement the Housing Study findings and actively pursue funding for housing projects.
- **Community Development Workshops:** Continuing workshops focused on improving quality of life, with the next session addressing underutilized and dilapidated buildings.

- **Industrial Park Activation:** Prioritizing the development of a new industrial park along a prime transportation corridor to attract new businesses and facilitate expansion.

The meeting's keynote speaker was Shannon Harner, Executive Director of the Nebraska Investment Finance Authority (NIFA), who shared insights on the role that housing plays in economic development with a focus on the importance of investing in attainable housing to meet the needs of an in-demand labor force.

CCNEDC also presented its annual awards, recognizing outstanding contributions to economic development in Cass County:

- **Business Recognition Award:** Kerns Excavating, a long-standing Cass County business, was recognized for its contributions to infrastructure development, job creation, and community involvement.
- **Service of the Year Award:** Cass County's volunteer fire departments were honored for their dedication and service, particularly during a dry and challenging fire season.
- **Friend in Economic Development Award:** John Winkler was recognized for his decades of service to Cass County, including his instrumental role in establishing Plattsmouth's LB840 program and the Four-Mile Industrial Park.

The CCNEDC annual meeting served as a testament to the progress made in 2024 and a launchpad for future economic development initiatives in Cass County. The organization's commitment to collaboration, strategic planning, and community engagement positions the county for continued growth and prosperity.

(Photos attached)

**\* For further interview opportunities, please reach out to Josh Charvat (contact information listed above). \***

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### **About the Cass County Nebraska Economic Development Council**

*The Cass County Nebraska Economic Development Council ([www.CCNEDC.com](http://www.CCNEDC.com)) is a nonprofit business organization and is part of the Greater Omaha Economic Development Partnership. The mission of CCNEDC is to attract, retain and grow businesses and jobs for all of Cass County Nebraska.*

### **About the Greater Omaha Chamber Economic Development Partnership**

*The Greater Omaha Chamber Economic Development Partnership ([www.OmahaChamber.org/economic-development/](http://www.OmahaChamber.org/economic-development/)) represents an eight-county area from two states (Nebraska and Iowa) that includes Cass, Dodge, Douglas, Mills, Otoe, Pottawattamie, Sarpy and Washington Counties. The regionalized partnership operates as a comprehensive resource, driving growth and championing collaboration.*