



P.O. Box 131 • 404 Grand Ave.  
Burwell, NE 68823  
308-346-5210  
BurwellEconDev@nctc.net  
www.BurwellOnline.com  
www.VisitBurwell.org

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Please Buy in Burwell

If you appreciate having retail businesses that are conveniently located in our community, then it is important to support those retailers with your business as much as possible. Many small communities have lost most of their retail businesses. However, with your help, Burwell retail can remain vibrant – keeping jobs and dollars in our local economy. Can't find what you want – just ask! Most of our retailers will order and stock whatever you need. Please buy in Burwell.

Recap of 2014 – Economic Development/Chamber/Tourism Activities

- Grant application development for new conference center funding (approved) •
- New conference center presentations at community fund event • Ag appreciation event •
- Rescue squad donation • Generational differences workshop • Ag scholarship program •
- Redevelopment bonds issued to fund improvements for new apartment facility •
- Tax increment financing project completion in conjunction with local developer •
- Housing area development proposals • *Escape* tourism magazine development •
- Series of economic development town hall meetings • City-wide garage sales •
- Facade grant projects at Crandall law office and Rodeo Theatre • Business-after-hours events •
- Burwell promo exhibits at Omaha boat, sports & travel show • Easter event •
- Burwell exhibit at Grand Island and Aurora outdoor shows • State fair promotional exhibit •
- *TeamMates* restaurant day promotion • Carnival event • Prairie chicken festival promotion •
- High school rodeo parking • Iron man disc golf tournament • Rodeo parking/signage •
- Rodeo parade • Rodeo history exhibit • Rodeo trolley management • Halloween parade •
- Food pantry donation • Business ribbon-cutting/open house events • Kids fishing rodeo •
- New home certification and sale • Cabela's KingKat Classic at Calamus tournament •
- Economic development program updates for citizen review committee •
- Chamber bucks buy local program • Annual chili cook-off event • Agri-tourism conference •
- New economic development program plan (approved) • City planning/zoning support •
- City ballot measures for infrastructure improvements (approved) • Holiday decorations •
- Thanksgiving and Christmas business promotion activities • City Christmas tree move •
- Swimming pool grant application • Support for new retail store development •
- City limits expansion proposal • Media interviews/promotion • Retail market study •
- Grant applications for new tourism attraction activities • Successful state housing audit •
- Economic development program updates at monthly city council meetings •
- Collaboration with UNK regarding workforce development needs •
- Business loan applications support • Business consultations/support •
- Visitor information requests fulfillment • Business referrals •

By the Numbers

Here's a quick summary of the activities and results of Burwell Economic Development since program inception.

- Business improvement and start-up low interest loans
  - \$637,000 towards \$1,533,000 of business projects in Burwell
- Business consultations and planning support
- Business attraction promotion
- Local business facade grants
  - \$30,000 towards \$78,000 of Burwell improvement projects
- Funding for road/utility/infrastructure improvements
- Chamber development, activities and management
- Tourism promotion development, activities and management
- Community development projects
  - Secured grants for \$962,000 to help with projects in Burwell
- City facility planning and housing development
- Local non-profit group support

COMMUNITY  
ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT  
UPDATE

# Burwell Business

SPRING  
2015



One of several potential conference center concepts

2014 REVIEW

The Burwell community was blessed with another good business year in 2014. Two key measures of business growth include the city's sales tax for economic development activities and the county's lodging tax for tourism promotion activities.

INCREASED RETAIL SALES

As measured by local sales tax records, Burwell retail sales were up again in 2014 over the previous year. In fact, annual retail sales have consistently increased in Burwell for the last eight years an average of 6% each year.

INCREASED TOURISM

Visitors to the Burwell area were also up again last year, contributing significantly to our local economy. As measured by 2014 lodging tax reports, the use of area lodging facilities showed an increase of 25% over the previous year – outpacing the state's overall lodging increase of 9%!

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## Conference Center Project Closer to Reality

Demand for a new meeting and event center in Burwell is growing, including increased requests to meet local needs, as well as an increasing number of requests from outside the community for professional meeting and event space. Many potential visitors to our area would like to combine their events (conferences, auctions, trade shows, concerts, reunions, receptions, etc.) with our area's unique recreational assets.

The proposed new facility will feature a large meeting/event/sports and recreation hall with the capacity to accommodate up to 500 people. The facility will also include a serving kitchen and meeting rooms, as well as several tourism related areas, including a Rodeo History Exhibit and a Visitor Information Center, designed to attract additional visitors to the Burwell area. There has also been discussion about the possibility to include an area within the new center dedicated to the Burwell Legion Club.

Current development activity is focused on securing a location in Burwell for the new center, followed by the development of architectural concepts and plans. A presentation that reviews the concept for the Calamus Conference Center is available for viewing at the Burwell Economic Development office (404 Grand Avenue).

Help Build the Calamus Conference Center!

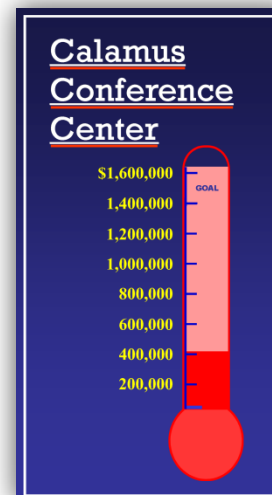
It is expected that the new community or conference center will require an investment of 1.5 million dollars, via direct financial contributions or in-kind donations (labor,

materials, property). Thus far, with the help of grants secured by Burwell Economic Development (more than \$300,000) and private donations, just over \$400,000 has now been raised for the new center. The Burwell Community Fund has initiated a fund to collect contributions to support the development of the new community/conference center. You can help make the new center a reality by donating to:

"Calamus Community Center Fund"  
c/o Burwell Community Fund  
P.O. Box 901, Burwell, NE 68823

In addition to private donations, corporate or business contributions (funding or in-kind building support) are encouraged, and partial facility naming rights may be considered for key contributors.

For additional information about this project, please call the Burwell Economic Development office at 346-5210.





### SUBCONN Continues Manufacturing Growth

Supplying the world's leading range of underwater pluggable electrical connectors to the world-wide underwater industry for over 30 years, SubConn, Inc., takes pride in manufacturing and delivering the highest quality products from its modern production facility in Burwell, which is certified according to ISO 9001:2008.



We are fortunate to have such a successful manufacturer like SubConn that supports our community, providing quality jobs to 53 employees in the Burwell facility, and another 21 staff members working at the nearby facility north of Ord.



### CMHC – Burwell's largest employer and significant economic contributor

Many locals may not realize that one of the best skilled nursing and assisted living facilities in the state is right here in Burwell!

Community Memorial Health Center was originally founded as a hospital in 1952. In 1968, a 40-bed nursing home was added. When the hospital closed in the late 80's, the CMHC Nursing Home remained open, adding a new assisted living area in 2001.

In addition to top-rated long-term care, today CMHC offers swing bed care (short-term

rehabilitation care), adult day care, respite care, hospice care, outpatient bathing, and transportation services.

CMHC's goals for the future are ambitious, including continued growth and development of a five star nursing home, in which the community and employees can be proud. Considering the growth potential, along with continued challenges associated with its aging facility, CHMC is also reviewing options to build a new facility within the next few years.

*"When one considers the incredible quality care that CMHC offers to our community, as well as how many people are employed and the overall positive impact on our local economy, it's easy to appreciate how important CMHC is to Burwell."* (David Sawyer – Burwell Econ. Dev.)

For more information about CMHC services, the organization's endowment fund, or details about becoming a supporting member, visit [www.cmhcburwell.com](http://www.cmhcburwell.com), or call 308-346-4440.



#### CMHC Quick Facts

- Community owned, non-profit organization
- 92 employees – 80 full-time employees
- Annual payroll exceeding \$2,235,000 (dramatic impact on local economy)
- Annual benefits to staff – \$22,000 in Burwell Chamber Bucks and local gift certificates.
- Annual donations to support local causes – \$20,000
- Most operational supplies purchased locally (food, pharmaceutical, maintenance supplies, etc.)
- Most demanded/sought after facility in region, as evidenced by highest census (occupancy) and lowest turnover – attracting residents (and their visitors) from Ord, Sargent, Taylor and Broken Bow
- 55 residents in Skilled Nursing Facility area – 13 residents in Assisted Living Facility area
- Profitable facility with current assets over three-million dollars (equipment and cash)
- Potential for additional growth with new/larger facility



### 8th Ave. Apartments Now Complete – Ready to Rent

In 2013, the Burwell Investment Club submitted an application to the City's Economic Development office for help to redevelop the property on the corner of north 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue and F Street – previously known as the Butter Factory facility. Unoccupied for years due to challenges associated with needed updates required by all potential business uses, the redevelopment application proposed to remove the old building and replace it with an eight unit housing facility – which would address the community's need for additional rental housing.

Through the Community Redevelopment Authority, Burwell Economic Development utilized the financial tool available to cities to pay for development improvements called Tax Increment Financing, to help finance the acquisition and demolition of the existing structure, which made the proposed new project financially feasible for the developer. Without the financing assistance, the property would likely have continued to sit empty for many years to come.

The new 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue Apartments were completed in November (2014), and are now ready for occupancy. According to the facility

developer and owner, the Burwell Investment Club, four of the apartments are already rented and occupied, and a couple others may be rented soon. Those interested in more information about the available apartments, or to view the two or three bedroom – two bathroom units, are encouraged to contact Terry DeGroff at 308-346-4508.



Additional redevelopment plans are currently being considered to support needed residential and commercial development in Burwell. Anyone interested in learning more about how Tax Increment Financing, or any other business development tool can be utilized to help with potential redevelopment projects, can contact David Sawyer at the Burwell Economic Development office (308-346-5210).

#### 8th Avenue Apartments – At a Glance –

##### Two Bedroom Units (980 sq. feet)

- Two bathrooms
- Laundry room
- All appliances included
- \$875 per month with 6-month lease
- \$850 per month with 12-month lease

##### Three Bedroom Units (1,350 sq. ft.)

- Two bathrooms
- Laundry room
- All appliances included
- \$1,220 per month with 6-month lease
- \$1,190 per month with 12-month lease

##### Other Details

- Rent includes water, sewer, trash removal, lawn care, snow removal, off street parking
- Tenant pays for electricity, phone, and cable if desired (pre-wired for cable/satellite)
- No smoking or pets

### Benefits of Local Sales Tax Change

#### New 1.5% tax rate goes into effect April 1

Last November, Burwell voters approved an increase to our local sales tax for economic development activities, changing the city sales tax from 1% to 1.5%. The one-half percent increase will be prioritized in the economic development budget to fund the long overdue redevelopment of the entire length of L Street. Voters also approved a new 15-year term for the Burwell economic development program.

Planning for the L Street project will be completed this year (2015), with construction expected to begin next year (2016) – including concrete paving to support commercial truck traffic and improved drainage.



### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BUSINESS LOAN PROGRAM

#### Sustaining – Growing

The Burwell Economic Development Revolving Loan Fund Program was made possible via the approval of the local option sales tax in 2005. Since that time, the program has provided low interest loans and loan guarantees to local existing and new businesses.

For more information about the business loan program or other business support programs, contact David Sawyer at 346-5210. All business discussions and applications are kept confidential.

#### Business Facade Improvement Grants Still Available

A number of Burwell businesses have taken advantage of this program and updated their appearance. Business property owners may apply for a grant to receive funding for half of the cost of a qualified and pre-approved project up to \$10,000 (\$5,000 grant, \$5,000 match by business). Call Burwell Economic Development at 308-346-5210 for more information.



#### Unique Burwell Business

Connie and John Eddy have been successfully operating [GetTarps.com](http://www.GetTarps.com) for 11 years and [Colorguard Floors](http://www.ColorguardFloors.com) for 13 years from their facility in Burwell. The unique business provides high-end tarps and industrial grade protective floor covers to commercial customers all over the world! More business information is available at [www.GetTarps.com](http://www.GetTarps.com) and [www.ColorguardFloors.com](http://www.ColorguardFloors.com).

