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**Howells Community Foundation Fund Completes Action Planning**

The Howells Community Fund advisory committee has completed its formal action planning with Nebraska Community Foundation.

Staff members of Nebraska Community Foundation, traveled from Lincoln to Howells on three separate evenings to provide insight and training into the action planning process. They focused on fundamental elements that will help Howells set a course toward our dreams.

The first session occurred on April 24, 2013 in the Howells Community Center. The public and the Howells Fund advisory committee were invited to attend. Everyone attending was asked and encouraged to discuss “what future does each resident want to create for the Howells community?”

The future or a vision for the Howells community, in the opinion of the participants, included the continuation and sustainment of our top-notch education infrastructure. It meant providing additional family entertainment and social attractions. Individual community beautification projects were also recommended. Improvements in the fire and rescue stations were suggested. An emphasis on quality, affordable housing was a major agreement from the participants with regard to the future of Howells.

Everyone left the session with an optimistic attitude and full wish list of recommendations for the continued positive advancement of our community.

The second session was held on June 19. Draft vision, mission and values statements were developed. Earlier, at the first action planning meeting, a list of recommendations for the future Howells community was developed. A clear articulation of the vision, mission, and values statements were one of the most critical requirements the committee needed to start this journey in support of those recommendations.

Greta Leach, the Nebraska Community Foundation’s affiliated fund development coordinator for Eastern Nebraska stated, “Creating a vision statement is like setting a course; it tells the world what difference you want to make in your community.”

She further commented, “If the vision is the picture of the future; your mission statement tells people what role the Howells Community Fund has in creating that future”.

The Howells Community Fund considered a values statement as “rules of the road” for our community fund.

Committees were formed to further develop drafts of the vision, mission and values statements, which would be the subject of the third action planning meeting.

The final action planning meeting took place on the July 17, once again, in the Howells Community Center. The committees presented their recommendations for the vision, mission and values statements and after a short discussion they were unanimously approved. They are:

**Vision**Howells is a caring, thriving community with varied educational, social, recreational, and economic opportunities and services. Our vibrant quality of life provides a lasting legacy for all generations calling Howells home.

**Mission**
Creating a lasting impact by inspiring the generosity of our community: past, present, and future.

**Values**We are a hardworking team driven to support our community’s future while encouraging success and fun. We are a trusted family, proud of where we are and where we are going. We are dedicated to reaching out to our community with integrity, positive encouragement, and compassion. We are open to working with all people, organizations, and groups to encourage diversity and progressive goals.

The remainder of the evening was used to discuss the various recommended strategies, objectives and priority settings to build the Fund’s capacity.

We are dedicated to the improvement and long-term viability of the Howells community. We encourage people from all walks of life to give back to their communities.

We are extremely proud to be a part of this and will continually update you on the progress of the Howells Community Fund.

The Howells Community Fund is an affiliated fund of the Nebraska Community Foundation. NCF serves more than 250 communities throughout the state. NCF and its affiliated funds have reinvested more than $323 million dollars in Nebraska communities since 1994.