

## Tourism, Film Office Join Division

Recognizing the importance of strategic planning and the economic benefits to communities from their efforts, the Tourism and Iowa Film Offices have become part of the Division of Community Development.

Stories: Tourism.....page 2

Film Office...page 7

## Community Development Districts Realigned

Three area consultants will now serve Iowa communities in newly designated regions.

See page 8

## THE DOWNTOWN RESOURCE CENTER

# Expanding Services to Iowa Communities

In July 2001 the Iowa Department of Economic Development announced the creation of the Iowa Downtown Resource Center - a recommendation from Main Street Iowa and an opportunity to take downtown development to a higher level.

"The Main Street Iowa program has a 15-year history of success and has become one of the National Main Street Center's top-ranked programs," said Thom Guzman, director of the new entity and former State Coordinator of the Main Street program. In those 15 years, Main Street Iowa has provided services to 46 communities, 32 of which are currently in the program.

The Main Street staff had long recognized the need to offer services to a broader audience - the 900+ communities that are not in the program - but, with a staff of only three, were unable to do so. The Iowa Department of Economic Development acknowledged that the program's resources, which include the state's most extensive library on downtown development, should be fully utilized, and made the bold move to expand services by creating the Downtown Center.

"Main Street Iowa will continue to be the premiere program of the Center offering training and technical assistance to those cities who pursue the application and selection process. However, we realize that not all communities want or need Main Street's comprehensive approach to downtown development. Those cities may seek assistance with a specific issue or access available resources on an a la carte basis," Guzman said.

The Downtown Center is the first of its kind in the nation. It will not only house the Main Street program but also will provide a menu of fee-based services that will include training opportunities, referrals, technical information, statewide awareness, and technical assistance to any Iowa city.

First year priorities, according to Guzman, will be to develop consultant exchange lists, organize reference materials and a lending library, develop and deliver one series of regional workshops, and assume planning for both the 2002 Iowa Downtown Conference and the Iowa Downtown Month celebration. The Center will also develop marketing materials to promote the expanded services.

## DOWNTOWN RESOURCE CENTER SERVICES

- Information exchange
- One-stop shop for downtown questions
- Lending library (deposits required ) of slides, videos, books, self-help workbooks
- Examples - sample contracts
- Consultant exchange
- Architects and landscape architects
- Structural engineers
- Retail and marketing consultants
- Historic preservation consultants
- Fee-based statewide training opportunities
- Iowa Downtown Conference
- Regional /ICN workshops
- Statewide promotion
- Iowa Downtown Month
- Services for Commercial CEPP Certified Communities
- Fee-based initial downtown assessment visits
- Fee-based technical assistance

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## What's inside?

Director's message.....page 3

Planning Calendar.....page 6

The FISH Philosophy.....page 8

SMART Conference.....page 4

Who's Who in the Division...page 4-5

## Tourism

# IOWA: A Great Place to Live, Work and Play



**Nancy Landess,**  
**Director**

Picture a postcard of Iowa. What do you see? Hard to choose, isn't it? Don't fret. The Iowa Tourism Office has the answer. It's the Iowa Travel Guide - a virtual picture postcard of the state, published annually and available for the asking.

The Travel Guide and companion Calendar of Events are just two routes to the Tourism Office's destination: increasing the number of visitors to Iowa and the dollars generated from their visits.

Tourism is the nation's largest

export industry, the country's third largest retail sales industry, and one of America's largest employers.

The economic benefits of tourism in Iowa continue to grow. Travel-generated expenditures reached \$4.2 billion in 2000 and travel-generated state tax receipts exceeded \$255 million in the same year. Even small communities have become savvy to tourism opportunities by finding niche markets, promoting historic sites and developing recreational facilities that will attract visitors.

"In today's climate, Iowa is well-positioned to take advantage of the trend toward shorter, more frequent trips, many by automobile, so promotional efforts are geared toward regional markets as well as in-state residents," says Nancy Landess, Tourism Office Manager. "We try to maximize the effectiveness of every marketing dollar spent. We partner with attractions and communities in advertising programs, grouping the ads in publications for greater impact," Landess says, "and the Iowa DOT is our partner in producing and distributing the state transportation map."

Marketing Iowa's destinations to group travel organizers is also part of the Tourism program.

The 21 state- and locally-owned Welcome Centers also distribute promotional materials and assist researchers by gathering data from travelers. Measuring results of marketing efforts is important in planning future strategies; information on destinations visited, dollars spent, length of stays and visitor demographics are among data gathered.

Competition for tourism dollars is strong. "It is essential that we market Iowa at the same level as surrounding states' programs," Landess says.



## By 2010:

*Iowa is a recreational destination, featuring the country's best network of trails, major new attractions, our natural prairies, rivers and woodlands, sports, arts, entertainment, our history and cultural heritage and a healthy lifestyle focusing on exercise and sports participation as a central part of community life.*

*-Iowa 2010 Strategic Planning Council*

## TOURISM OFFICE PROGRAMS

- Publications: Iowa Travel Guide, Calendar of Events, Iowa Transportation Map, Group Tour Manual, Ag Tour Manual
- Advertising: magazine, newspapers, television, cooperative advertising
- Group Travel: representation at marketplaces; group travel publications; special targeted events
- Communications: [www.traveliowa.com](http://www.traveliowa.com), newsletters, press releases, targeted mailings
- Merchandise: available through Tourism Office, by catalog, [www.traveliowa.com](http://www.traveliowa.com), at Tourism Conference and Iowa State Fair
- Welcome Centers: throughout the state
- Special Events: Iowa State Fair Tourism Building, RAGBRAI
- Research: multi-track evaluation system, in-house studies and custom studies by outside research firms
- Partnerships: Iowa Lottery, Iowa Sports & Vacation Show with Tourism Regions; Iowa Department of Natural Resources and Iowa State Patrol
- CEPP: tourism component
- Conferences/Education: Iowa Tourism Conference and Trade Show, Iowa Tourism Unity Day
- Vision Iowa/Community Attractions and Tourism Program (CAT): awards programs

# Division of Community Development

“Building local capacity for business development, housing and infrastructure is key to Iowa’s future.”

*Sandy Ebrig  
Division Administrator*



The success of economic development efforts today is directly aligned with our ability to manage change. This includes our ability as individuals and as communities to impact the creation of wealth in Iowa.

The Iowa Dept. of Economic Development is leading this change management with its focus on business and community development. IDED is enacting greater integration of resources, both financial and technical. The goals of Iowans as adopted in the 2010 Plan are the mantra for community development assistance.

Input from our stakeholders is needed, as we determine the best allocation of existing resources along with new ideas to impact community development. The Tourism Office and Infrastructure Development Team have invited input groups to participate in planning sessions this winter.

Community Developers will want to mark their calendars for the continued series of interesting educational ICN sessions covering examples of 2010 action!

Also, mark your calendars for the SMART conference on May 2, 2002 at the Polk County Convention Center. This year’s conference will include an emphasis on both community and business development topics.

Sandy Ehrig  
Division Administrator,  
Division of Community Development  
Iowa Department of Economic Development



# Smart Conference

Ideas for a new economy for Iowa communities is the theme of this year's SMART Conference, Iowa's most prestigious economic development gathering, which will be held Thursday, May 2nd at the Polk County Convention Complex, Des Moines.

Sponsored by the Iowa Utility Association and the Iowa Department of Economic Development, the all-day event is the largest gathering of the economic development community in the state, with an expected attendance of more than 600.

While program details are still in the works, this year's conference will offer topics of great interest to Iowa's communities and economic developers. A special focus of the SMART Conference is the presentation of the Community Economic Preparedness Program (CEPP) Awards to the state's leading community development organizations.

Other timely sessions at the SMART Conference will cover workforce recruitment strategies; energy infrastructure; film and tourism discussions; community planning; and business retention and expansion.

Participants represent a broad background of vocations and interests, including economic development directors, chamber of commerce persons, officials from all levels of government, business executives, and others who are interested in learning more about improving the economic outlook of their community or region.

For additional information and registration for the 2002 SMART Economic Development Conference, contact the Iowa Utility Association, 515/282-2115, or the Iowa Department of Economic Development, 515/242-4716. Registration fees are \$35 in advance, and \$40 at the door.

# SMART

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
CONFERENCE

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Melanie Morgan, Division Secretary

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# IOWA

SMART IDEAS

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# Division of Community Development **2002 Planner**

<b>JANUARY</b>	<b>FEBRUARY</b>	<b>MARCH</b>
<p>7 Homeless Applications Due            14 Housing Applications Due            14 HOME Applications Due            22 LHAP – IDED/IFA Joint Application Workshop</p>	<p>13-17 Des Moines Sports Show, Iowa State Fairgrounds            13-15 Iowa Chamber of Commerce Executives Winter Conference</p>	<p>1 Water &amp; Sewer Fund Awards            1 Facilities &amp; Service Funds Awards            12/13 Governor's Conference on Volunteer Service            15 LHAP – IDED/IFA Joint Applications Due</p>
<b>APRIL</b>	<b>MAY</b>	<b>JUNE</b>
<p>3 Home and Housing Fund Awards            16 CDBG, Water&amp; Sewer Fund, Facilities &amp; Service Fund and Housing Fund Joint Recipient Workshop            Mid-April HOME Recipient Workshop            26 Tourism Unity Day, West Des Moines</p>	<p>1 LHAP – IDED/IFA Joint Awards            1 Preliminary Entry for Iowa Community Betterment            2 Smart Conference            5-11 National Tourism Week            10 Main Street Iowa Annual Awards &amp; Announcement of New Cities            16 Homeless Recipient Workshop</p>	<p>TBD CDBG, Water&amp; Sewer Fund, Facilities Service Fund Application Workshop</p>
<b>JULY</b>	<b>AUGUST</b>	<b>SEPTEMBER</b>
	<p>1-31 Iowa Downtown Month            19-21 Iowa Downtown Summit</p>	<p>TBD CDBG, Water&amp; Sewer Fund, Facilities Service Fund Fall Application Invitations</p>
<b>OCTOBER</b>	<b>NOVEMBER</b>	<b>DECEMBER</b>
<p>TBD Housing Fund Application Workshop            TBD CDBG Common Facilities &amp; Services Full Application Invitations</p>	<p>TBD Home Tax Credit Application Workshop</p>	<p>TBD CDBG, Water&amp; Sewer Fund, Facilities Service Fund Fall (Invited) Applications Due</p>

# IOWA FILM OFFICE A Reel Life Story

On any given day, your Chamber of Commerce or tourism bureau might receive a call from Wendol Jarvis asking if you have a 50s era motel in your community, two identical farm houses nearby, or a resident who owns a 1946 wood-side station wagon.

Why is he asking? Because he is working with a location manager who is considering Iowa as a site for a video or major motion picture. As director of the Iowa Film Office, Jarvis describes its role as facilitators. "We help communities capture the economic opportunities from the film and video industry," he says.

Industry contacts come to the film office from 3 sources - location managers, directors and writers. Most calls are received from location managers who have very specific needs (such as side-by-side identical farm houses) and want fast results.

Film directors call during the early development of a picture. The Iowa Film Office provides them with information on local resources - crews, suppliers, lodging - available for the production as well as site locations.



A contact from a writer comes even before the picture is sold and creates an opportunity for the film office to provide information, unique to an Iowa location, thus increasing the potential for local filming.

Most productions are small projects with budgets

under \$500,000. Feature films make up only 2-3% of the projects but generate 90% of the dollars spent by the industry in Iowa.

During a production, Jarvis is on location almost daily but not at the filming site. His focus is on preparation for the following day. When not involved in a production, the staff of 2 travels the state evaluating sites and adding photographs to the collection; 80,000 images are currently on file in the film office.

Jarvis also conducts workshops on the film industry and speaks to civic groups about the 'on location' experience which he describes as comparable to "having RAGBRAI in your town for three months."

"The economic value of a major motion picture is far more than the \$65-125,000 per day left within the area," Jarvis says. "Five minutes in a major picture is equivalent to \$6 billion in promotional value."



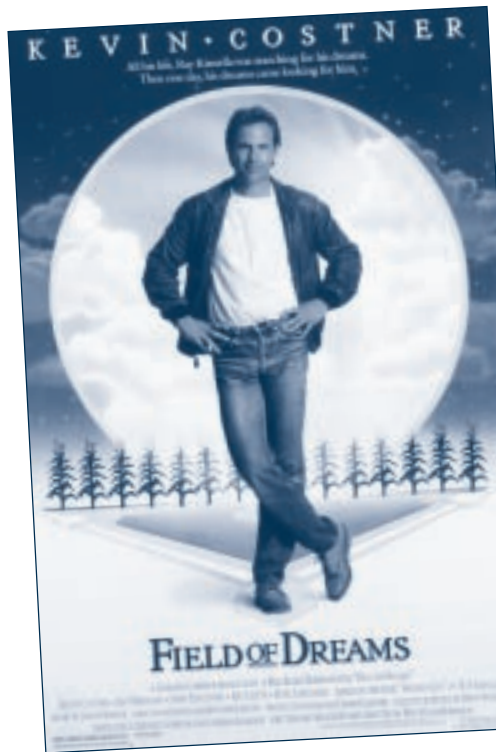
**Wendol Jarvis**  
Director

## Want to be in the movies? FIRST STEPS

1. Call the Iowa Film Office for an appointment to meet with staff and go through their files to determine which images for your community are available.
2. Provide the office with information and photographs that complete the 'picture' of your community OR set a date for a community assessment. Film office staff will tour and take photographs to 'get a feel' for the town.
3. Be prepared to react quickly when you receive a request for information or an unexpected site visit. The film office relies on communities to respond if they want to be considered as a site, and film companies use response time as a judgment tool.

### CONTACT:

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*Although Winterset had for many years celebrated their bridges and native son, John Wayne, the filming of "Bridges of Madison County" brought national attention to the small community.*

*Nearby Adel lists 'the shop where Francesca bought her dress' in their historic tour brochure.*

*Dyersville, site of the 1989 production of "Field of Dreams", regularly replaces directional signs to the film site which, even after 12 years, continue to be coveted souvenirs.*



# Go FISH! for the latest in customer service training

The Iowa Department of Economic Development is promoting the latest in community development training - the FISH! Philosophy.

FISH! will have an impact on leadership, orientation, teamwork, retention, creativity, customer services and preparation for change and quality improvement.

IDED Consultants will deliver this program to communities through local development organizations at no cost. Attendance groups of 25 "front-liners" are recommended for the 90-minute training sessions which offer new ways of viewing jobs, business, organization, customer service and visioning.

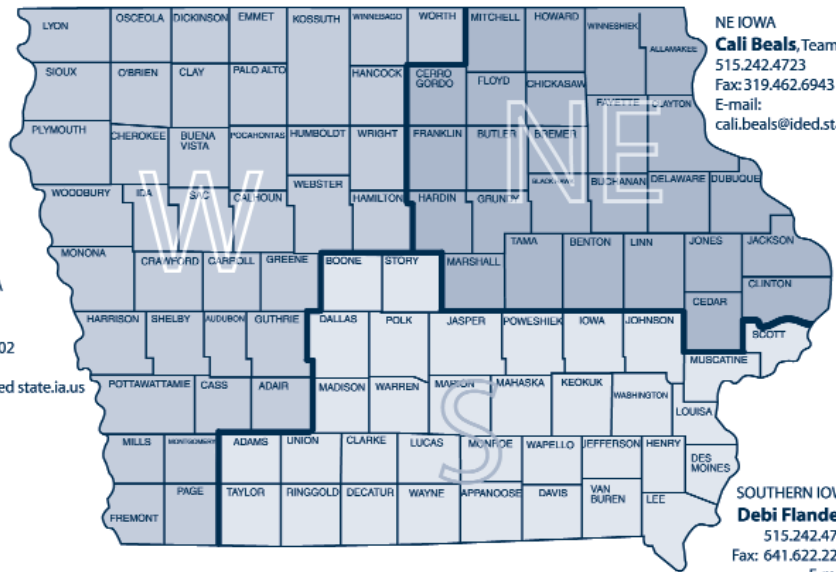
Communities interested in scheduling training should contact the IDED Consultant for their area to get further details.

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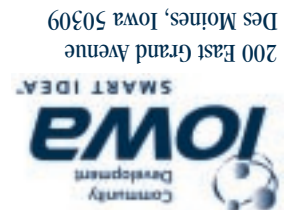
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