

ADAMS COUNTY REGISTER OF DEEDS

500 NORTH DENVER
P.O. BOX 203
HASTINGS, NEBRASKA 68902
TELEPHONE: (402) 461-7150
FAX: (402) 461-7154

September 26, 2007

Mr. John Gale, Chairman
Nebraska State Records Board
State Capital
Suite 2300
Lincoln, NE 68509

Dear Mr. Gale:

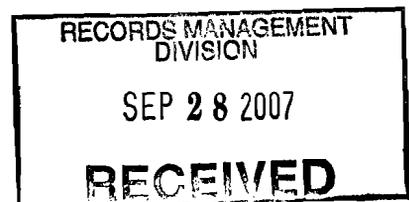
Enclosed please find a Local Governmental Grant Application For State Records Board To Improve Access to Public Information. Also enclosed are letters in support of this project.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Jan Johnson
Register of Deeds



**APPLICATION FOR STATE RECORDS BOARD GRANT
TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO PUBLIC INFORMATION
(Local Governmental Grant Application)**

Cities and Counties desiring grants from the Nebraska State Records Board for projects to create or improve electronic access to government information or services should complete this application and follow any procedure outlined in this application and any accompanying materials.

I. Grant Summary

- 1. Name of entity applying for grant** Adams County Register of Deeds, Hastings, Nebraska

Project partner: Adams County, City of Hastings & Hastings Utilities

- 2. Title of project** Digitizing of Adams County Records

3. Brief Description of Project

Conversion of microfilm of remaining historical deeds from 1872 to 1980 to electronic images. Purchase software upgrade to enable accessibility of all Register of Deeds records by the public via the Internet.

- 3. Grant request amount** \$25,000

- 4. Will there be a fee for accessing records associated with this project?** No

- 5. If yes, provide any statutory reference or authorization for the fee.** N/A

II Grant Detail

- 1. Please describe the project in detail.**

Adams County, in conjunction with the City of Hastings and the Hastings Utilities Department, has been working on the implementation of a County/City GIS system. Since its inception, the Register of Deeds has provided the scanning of 1700 plus Subdivision Plat maps to be used as a base for the County's GIS project.

Since obtaining a scanner several years ago, the Register of Deeds has scanned in all recordings from late 1980 thru the present. In addition, this past budget year, the Register of Deeds contacted Bob Fountaine, MIPS, Inc. to convert microfilmed documents from March 27, 1972 through January 12, 1977, consisting of 25,000 images adding to our database.

These images are now available on the network, enabling the Register of Deeds, Assessor and Data Processing Department the ability to access all of these filings. Upon completion of the GIS project, this ability will be made available to the general public on the Internet.

The purpose of applying for this grant is to allow the Register of Deed's office conversion of our remaining deeds history on microfilm to electronic images of all the recorded deeds since Adams County's first recording in 1872 through what we have completed to date since 1980.

This will have a dual purpose.

1. To allow all historical deeds access by the general public from 1872 to the present.
2. To preserve the history of Adams County records.
 - a. The print in our old books is fading.
 - b. The process that was first used for our office copy of the microfilm was duplicated making them now hard to read and at times, impossible to print.

There are remaining approximately 147,000 microfilm images that need to be converted to electronic images at an approximate cost of \$19,745. Bob Fountaine, MIPS, Inc. would be completing this project.

The second part of the proposed project would be the implementation of Deed's Indexing software that enables these documents to integrate with our GIS system. The cost of this software upgrade would be \$7500 to be purchased from Terrascan. Adams County is in the process of upgrading our current imaging software to LaserFiche which will enable these electronic documents to be accessible by the public via the Internet.

2. Please describe who the beneficiary or recipient of this service will be and projected activity for access or use of the proposed service.

The Adams County Register of Deeds Office along with the Adams County Tax Payers will be the beneficiaries of this project by improving and protecting the history of the records. The recipients of this service will be immeasurable due to the Internet access that will be made available. With the completion of this project, every deed since the first filing in 1872 will not only be on microfilm but also available as an electronic image. Completion of this project will allow abstracters, banks, attorneys and the general public to complete their business from their offices instead of having to travel to the Register of Deeds office. This will save the public valuable time and funds.

3. Timeline for implementation

We expect this project to be completed by mid 2008.

4. Subdivision contribution to project (labor, equipment, etc.)

Adams County Register of Deeds has furnished the subdivision plat maps to be used as a base for the GIS project. Over recent years, the Adams County Register of Deeds budget has provided a scanner, computers, printer and funds to convert documents to electronic images from March 1972 through January 1977 and October 1980 through the present. Adams County is cost sharing the GIS project with the City of Hastings and Hastings Utilities Departments.

5. Is other funding available for this project (explain)?

The projected cost of the remaining Register of Deeds project is \$27,300. MIP's projected cost to convert the remaining microfilm deeds to electronic images is \$19,745. Terrascan's cost to upgrade software to Deedsifter which enables all of the Register of Deeds records to be accessible by the public via the Internet is \$7500. The Register of Deeds 2007-2008 budget has allowed for \$2300 for record preservation which leaves a shortfall of \$25,000. There are no other grants available! Adams County has funded what they have been able to thus far, but there are no additional funds available to complete this integral part of the project. This grant would enable us to complete our goal of preserving this data and providing access of this historical information to the general public.

6. Why is the grant money needed for the project, and if applicable, how will the service be sustained once the grant money is expended?

Adams County has funded what they have been able to thus far, but there are no additional funds available to complete this integral part of the project. There are no other grants available. Current staffing will maintain the program with tax dollars used for the annual software licensing fees.

7. Please describe how this project will enhance the delivery of government services or access to those services.

With the completion of converting the remaining deeds from microfilm to electronic image, every deed from 1872 to the present will only be a fingertip away from the public. Deedsifter and LaserFishe will enable these electronic documents to be accessible by the public via the Internet.

8. Please describe how this project will improve the efficiency of government services or access to those services.

- a) Every deed recorded in Adams County since 1872 will be accessible to the public via the Internet
- b) Increased ability to provide information to the public
- c) Protection of valuable history. As in the case of the Katrina Hurricane, valuable history was lost.

- d) Entities will no longer need to travel to the Register of Deeds Office. They will be able to access Adams County Register of Deeds records by Internet.
- e) Entities will be able to obtain legible copies of documents from their computers at no cost.
- f) Increased communication and efficiency between the different departments within Adams County, City of Hastings and Hastings Utilities.

9. Please describe any collaborative effort among multiple jurisdiction or political subdivisions related to this project.

Adams County is cost-sharing the GIS project with the City of Hastings and Hastings Utility Departments. However, the costs of converting the rest of the deed history on microfilm to our computer network and integrating the Register of Deeds information into this project is left coming out of the Register of Deed's budget.

10. Please provide information on who will complete the project

Bob Fountaine, MIPS, Inc. will convert the 147,000 microfilm images to electronic images. The software upgrade which will enable the electronic documents to be made accessible by the public via the Internet will be purchased from Terrascan and Laserfiche. Ron Kucera, Adams County IT manager and Adams County GIS coordinator will tie the information into the county's computer system and GIS.

11. Does the project involve the licensing, permitting or regulation of businesses, if yes then explain how the project or service will allow integration with the State of Nebraska's Business Portal and the one stop online business registration system.

No

III. Technical Information

1. Describe the hardware, software, and communication needed for this project and explain why these choices were made.

The implementation of Deed's Indexing software (Deedsifter) which is compatible with Laserfiche is necessary to enable the Register of Deeds documents to be integrated with the Adams County GIS system. Adams County is in the process of upgrading our current imaging software to LaserFiche which has a web portal for our electronic documents to become accessible by the public via the Internet.

2. Address any technical issues with the proposed technology including: Conformity with generally accepted industry standards. Projects which interface with state systems (such as distance learning systems) should also address NITC standards and guidelines. Compatibility with existing institutional and/or statewide infrastructure. Reliability, security and scalability (future needs for growth or adaptation).

This software upgrade conforms to industry standards and robust security will prevent unauthorized access so that our computer network and records will remain secure.

3. Describe how technical support will be provided.

Adams County has an in-house IT and GIS Department to provide secure technical support.

4. Describe How the Project will comply with the State's Technology Access Clause.

The application will be written in a way that will allow users with disabilities to use the system.

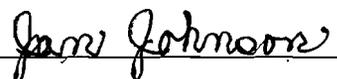
IV. Contact Information, Signature.

Contact person for any questions regarding this application Jan Johnson

Phone # 402-461-7150

E-mail jjohnson@adamscounty.org

Signed this 26 day of September, 2007

Signature 

Title Adams County Register of Deeds

Please Return to:

**State Records Board
440 So. 8th St. Suite 210
Lincoln, NE 68508
(402) 471-2745**

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September 18, 2007

Mr. John Gale
Nebraska Secretary of State
P.O. Box 94608
State Capitol Suite 1305
Lincoln, Nebraska 68509-94608

Re: Adams County Register of Deeds grant request

Dear Mr. Gale:

I am writing in support of a request for grant funding which is being made by the Adams County Register of Deeds, Hastings, Nebraska, for funds to complete the scanning process of real estate deeds from the beginning of real estate records to 1972. Those older deeds are important in my work as an attorney working in real estate records. When such a deed is required to verify record ownership, it is critical that the deed be legible and readily available. For the past few years I have been urging the Register of Deeds office to complete the process of digitizing their records, and making those records available over the Internet to the public. It is important to the efficient and effective use of these public records that they be available in a manner which is becoming the standard method of accessing public records, i.e. through Internet access. I would appreciate your office's acceptance of the grant request from the Adams County Register of Deeds, so that this process can be completed in a timely fashion.

Thank you.

Cordially,



D. Charles Shoemaker

PRAIRIE TITLE, INC.
420 WEST 5TH STREET, SUITE 103
P.O. BOX 309
HASTINGS, NEBRASKA 68902
TELEPHONE: (402) 463-6673
FAX: (402) 463-6743

September 18, 2007

Mr. John Gale, Chairman
Nebraska State Records Board
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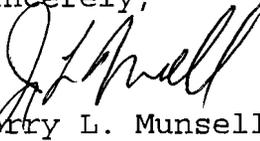
Dear Mr. Gale:

I am writing in support of the Adams County Register of Deed's office project to convert documents on microfilm to electronic images.

Our office personnel must travel to the Register of Deeds office several times each day to access these documents. Having the documents on the internet would be very beneficial to us, and even more so to those living outside of the City of Hastings.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Jerry L. Munsell
Registered Abstractor
and Title Agent

Agent for Chicago Title Insurance Company

Adams County IT Department
500 West 4th St. Rm. 108
Hastings NE 68901

09/26/2007

Mr. John Gale, Chairman
Nebraska State Records Board
State Capital
Suite 2300
Lincoln, NE 68509

Dear Mr. Gale,

Please accept this letter in support of the grant application on behalf of the Adams County Register of Deed's. The necessity of preserving these historical documents and integrating these records with our GIS system, as well as, allowing public access to these documents via the internet is an important step in our goals here at Adams County.

Completion of this project will help us achieve this goal of bringing to the public a service and resource that is invaluable to the history of this county and its public and for the efficient administration of various private and public entities.

The funds available on the county level are limited and any additional funding available would be greatly appreciated and used with the utmost fiscal responsibility.

Respectfully Yours,



Ronald Kucera
Adams County IT

Matthew S. Rossen
Mayor
mrossen@cityofhastings.org



220 North Hastings Avenue
P.O. Box 1085
Hastings, NE 68902
Telephone: (402) 461-2317
Fax: (402) 461-2323

September 24, 2007

Dear Sirs,

As Mayor of the City of Hastings, please accept this letter from the City of Hastings as fully supporting the grant request of the Adams County Register of Deed Office for the conversion of the records that are currently on microfilm to digital images.. The Register of Deeds Office has been a great partner with the Hastings on our GIS program for many years. Over time, they have been able to diversify and expand their services to meet the needs of those in our community. We are very proud of their efforts and accomplishments as a public office in Hastings.

The ability of the Register of Deeds Office to complete this project will be an asset to the citizens and developers in the entire region. The ability to complete this task would have a positive impact through the Adams County area.

Again, the City of Hastings fully supports the grant application request of the Adams County Register of Deeds Office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matthew S. Rossen".

Matthew S. Rossen
Mayor

MSR/gs



September 18, 2007

Mr. John Gale, Chairman
Nebraska State Records Board
State Capital
Suite 2300
Lincoln, NE 68509

Dear Mr. Gale,

I am writing this letter in support of the grant application for the Adams County Register of Deeds office. The City of Hastings, Adams County, and Hastings Utilities have been working together on the GIS system for some time now and are seeing the benefits of having this system in place. Working together we are providing the public with internet access to information that saves them valuable time and money. Much work still needs to be done. This grant would convert the remaining deeds to electronic format and provide the public internet access to this information. I, for one, would save considerable time in accessing deeds for writing easements.

Technology is moving at a fast pace and the general public is requiring us to provide more information to them via the internet. The grant would help relieve the financial burden to make this possible.

We encourage your committee to consider this grant application to help improve our GIS system and provide the public access to all the deeds recorded at the Adams County Courthouse.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ron Sekora". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "R".

Ron Sekora
Coordinating Engineer

Network\Docs\Employees\Sekora\HU07\Letters\Register of Deeds Grant

"Locally owned and operated since 1886"