TERESA MCKEEMAN
Garden County Clerk
Clerk of The District Court
611 Main Street ~ P.O. Box 486
Oshkosh, Nebraska 69154
308-772-3924
clerk@garden.nacone.org

RECORDS MANAGEMENT DIVISION
APR 15 2011
RECEIVED

April 12, 2011

Nebraska State Records Board
440 S 8th St Ste 210
Lincoln, NE 68508

To Whom It May Concern:

Enclosed please find our application for the Nebraska State Records Grant. We ask you to consider Garden County for any financial assistance you deem fit. This grant would allow us to take a step forward in making our public records more accessible to the pubic, county offices, attorneys and abstractors, including those that are handicapped.

This project will enable us to email public record requests to those abstractors or attorney that aren't located in our county, or even to landowners that are in the county. Our county is quite large and some of our landowners live up to 60 miles from the courthouse. Having all of our land records and commissioner records accessible on CDs would save those people travel and time.

Preservation of Garden County's history is another advantage. Having our records accessible by computer will limit the damage of our delicate books, some of which are over 100 years old. Also having a backup of these records stored off site will be a benefit in case of a disaster.

Thank you for considering our application.

Sincerely,

Teresa McKeeman

Teresa McKeeman
Garden County Clerk

Nebraska State
Records Board
440 S 8th St Ste 210
Lincoln, NE 68508
(402) 471-2745

John A. Gale
Chairman

APPLICATION FOR STATE RECORDS BOARD GRANT TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO PUBLIC INFORMATION

The Nebraska State Records Board is sponsoring a grant program for Nebraska government agencies for the development of programs and technology to improve electronic access to state government information and services. Grants will be awarded for one time funding of small projects. No grant request shall exceed $25,000.00. The grants may be used for the creation or enhancement of electronic access and delivery of government services and information, but not to fund ongoing operations. Nebraska government agencies wishing to apply for these grants may want to first contact Nebraska.gov to establish feasibility and scope of the project.

Applications received by April 20, 2011 will be considered for funding by the NE State Records Board at their meeting on July 20, 2011.

NOTE: Loss of Funding. The NE State Records Board may be unable to award grant funds, in whole or in part, in the event funding is no longer available.

Grant Criteria

Grant projects requesting funding must meet criteria #1-3.

1. Enhance the delivery of local government agency services and improve the public and business access to those services.
2. Meet the all applicable Nebraska Information Technology Commission Standards and Guidelines. State's technology access clause for providing equal access to services for persons with disabilities. A copy of the technology access clause is available at: http://www.nitc.state.ne.us/standards/index.html under 2. Accessibility Architecture.
3. If the project or service created or improved pursuant to the grant application involves the licensing, permitting or regulation of businesses, then the project or service must allow integration with the State of Nebraska's Business Portal at: http://www.nebraska.gov/index.phtml?section=business, and the One-Stop Online Business Registration System at: http://www.nebraska.gov/osbr/cgi/domestic.cgi?/osbraapplication/init/init/None.

In addition, the following criteria will be considered when reviewing applications:

- Does the project enhance the delivery of state/local government agency services and improve the public, government and business access to those services?
- Does the project reduce the amount of reliance on human capital, paper, and office overhead?
- Does the project span more than one office or agency?
- What is the size of the customer base for this service and the geographic impact?
- Is there financial and or in kind contribution from other partners?
- Is there documented community support for the project?

Responses are required to all questions in Parts I , II & III in order to be considered for funding:

Part I. Grant Summary

1. **Name of agency applying for grant** Garden County
2. **Title of project** Computer Access to Public Records
3. **Brief description of project:**

   Garden County proposes to have its paper records, e.g. Deed, Mortgage and Miscellaneous Books, Commissioner Minutes and Oil and Gas Lease records, scanned on to CDs and into a 360 gigabyte external hard drive. A work station with a computer and printer will be set up so customers can access and print information quickly and easily.

4. **Grant amount requested $** 20,000
   The bid is for $19,125, the balance is to cover any overages vendor might incur.

5. If the grant is to create an application, is the application to have a fee associated with its use for accessing public records, or is the application free for use by the public, businesses and other governmental agencies?
N/A

If there is to be a fee, provide any statutory authorization for assessing the fee.
N/A

6. If the grant application is for a Geographic Information System project, do you and the agency you represent agree to share the data collected in that project, without costs, with other interested government agencies in the State that may have a need for such data? N/A

Part II. Grant Detail

1. **Please describe the project in detail, to include your vision for the project. (You may attach this description).**
   See Attachment 1.

2. **Please describe who the beneficiary or recipient of this service will be.**
   The beneficiaries will be the general public who, for example, want to research family holdings, lawyers, title company personnel, oil and gas lease researchers, appraisers, other Counties, the State and Courthouse employees.

3. **What is the projected activity for access or use of the proposed service?**
   Initially, people who want to access this service will go to the Clerk's or Assessor's office and ask for access or training on how to use the new system. Currently, people who use the books regularly come and go as they please. Ultimately, that will be how this service is used, except for newcomers.

4. **Timeline for implementation of the project (a specific completion date (MM/YYYY) must be provided). Grant funds may lapse if not expended prior to completion date.**
   Start date: 07/21/2011, End date: 02/29/2012.

5. **Please specify in detail your, or any other Subdivision(s) contribution to the project (financial, labor, equipment etc.). Provide specific dollar amounts.**
   Project administration and support will be furnished by the County. Project support includes work space, utilities, clerical help and any other labor or overhead expenses. A reasonable estimate would be $500-$1,000.

6. **Is other funding available for this project (explain)? Please explain what efforts your agency has made to obtain funding.**
   This is the first attempt to find funding for this project.

7. **Does the project require additional statutory authority (explain)?**

   No.

8. **Specify (in detail) what the grant money will be used for. Include a complete cost breakdown of the project. Please attach bids from vendors (if applicable) and describe the relationship, if any, between a vendor and you or your agency.**
   See Attachments 2 & 2a.
   There is no prior relationship to this vendor. The Clerk, Teresa McKeeman, researched businesses that provide record scanning services and talked to officials from other counties before approaching this vendor for a bid.

9. **Why the grant money is needed for the project, and, if applicable, how will the service be sustained once the grant money is expended?**
   Garden County operates on a very frugal budget in order to keep residents' tax burden manageable. Support from a grant is necessary in order to implement this project. Accessibility to records is vital to many individuals and businesses in and out of the County. This project will increase accessibility. Once the scanning is done, workstation set up and staff trained, there will be little maintenance funding required. Staff will maintain the system and train new users as needed.

10. **Should available fund not allow the NSRB to grant the full amount requested, but a reduced amount, would this project still be financially feasible?**
    Yes, within limits. We would have to get the Commissioners to agree to the amount.

11. **Please describe how this project will enhance the delivery of government agency services and improve the public and/or business access to those services.**
    See Attachment 3

12. **Please describe how this project will improve the efficiency of agency operations.**

    It will reduce staff time in helping customers, reduce maintenance on old books and reduce staff time in doing County-related research. It will improve the flow of user traffic in the area. It will be a more efficient method for doing research for all involved.

13. **Please describe how this project will facilitate collaboration between either local, state, federal and/or other public or private institutions.**
    By being more accessible, other institutions will be better able to get information. It will allow us to work with other agencies/institutions more efficiently, saving time on both sides.

14. **Does the project involve the licensing, permitting or regulation of business? If yes, explain how the project or service will allow integration with the State of Nebraska's Business Portal, located at: http://www.nebraska.gov/index.phtml?section=business, and the One-Stop Online Business registration system located at: https://www.nebraska.gov/osbr/index.cgi**
N/A

15. **Community Support. Please include letters of support to document the public expression that has caused you to implement this application.**
See Attachments 4-7.

Part III. Technical Information

1. **Describe the hardware, software, and communications needed for this project and explain why these choices were made.**
See Attachment 2, Vendor Bid.
The vendor recommended the hardware and software, which are standard items for this type of work. The workstation and CDs will be easy to use and accessible. The external hard drive will back-up information and be stored off site. This type of system is used in other Nebraska counties.
By having the documents converted to images, we will be one step closer to going on-line with the information.
This system also allows for converting text so that it can be read to the user (Adobe Reader). We consulted with the vendor about access for the blind and hope to implement it.

2. **Address any technical issues with the proposed technology including:**

   - **Conformity with general accepted industry standards. Projects which interface with other state systems (such as distance learning systems) must meet NITC technical standards and guidelines. (The NITC standards and guidelines are located at: http://www.nitc.state.ne.us/standards/).**
   - **Compatibility with existing institutional and/or statewide infrastructure.**
   - **Reliability, security and scalability (future needs for growth or adaptation).**

   This project does not require any special equipment. The computer will be a standalone unit with printer and use Microsoft and Adobe software.

3. **Describe how the project will comply with the State's Technology Access Clause:** meet all applicable Nebraska Information Technology Commission Standards and Guidelines. A copy of the Standards are available at: http://www.nitc.state.ne.us/standards/index.html. **under 2. Accessibility Architecture.**

   We have reviewed the State's Access Clause and think that we will be in basic compliance, especially after talking with Dr. Christy Horn, ADA Officer, and the Vendor. See Part III, 2 above. The vendor recommended a way to have text read to

those who don't see well and Dr. Horn recommended a reader and software that are beyond our budget at this time but something that will be considered for the future (along with going on-line).

4. **Describe how technical support will be provided.**

   The vendor will train staff in how to use the system. The County has an IT consultant who works with hardware and software issues.

Part IV. STATE LAW COMPLIANCE

Nebraska law, sections 4-108 through 4-114 state that no political subdivision of the State shall provide public benefits, to include grants or contracts, to a person not lawfully present in the United States. If this application is awarded in whole or in part, and during the time the grant is in effect, the undersigned, on behalf of the political subdivision grant applicant, by signing this grant application, affirmatively states and acknowledges that the political subdivision will comply with this law.

Part V. CONTACT INFORMATION & SIGNATURE

Contact person, and title, for any questions regarding this application:

Teresa McKeeman — County Clerk
Printed Name — Title

Phone # 308-772-3924 **E-mail** clerk@garden.nacone.org

Physical Address: 611 Main Street, PO Box 486, Oshkosh, NE 69154

I, the Authorized Representative of Garden County, certify to the Nebraska State Records Board that the applicant/agency has the necessary authority to undertake the proposed project, will comply with Affirmative Action requirements and provide a drug free workplace environment.

Signed this 11th **day of** April **, 20** 11

Robert Radke

Agency Director/Chairman, County Commissioners

Please return completed application to:

Executive Director
Nebraska State Records Board
440 South 8th Street, Suite 210
Lincoln, NE 68508-2294
(402) 471-2745
(402) 471-2406 (fax)

Board Staff use only, do not fill in below this line
Grant Request Number: _____ Date Request Received: _____
Grant Amt Requested: _____ Grant Request Score: _____
Technical Comm. Recommendation: _____
Grant Disposition: _____ Date of Mtg Minutes: _____

(Last updated 02/07/2011)

ATTACHMENT 1

Part II. 1. Garden County proposes to have most of its public records scanned onto CDs and a 360 gigabyte external hard drive. The records include Deed, Mortgage, Miscellaneous and Oil and Gas Books, as well as the Index Books and the Commissioner Minutes Books. These are large, heavy, paper-based books dating back to the late nineteenth century. Currently, anyone wishing to access information must use these books, which are cumbersome and, at the same time, delicate because of their age. The records are stored in a small vault, which means there is very little work space.

Once the documents are scanned, we will set up a computer workstation (kiosk) in the vault where people can access the information without having to use the books. The CDs will be used at the workstation. The external hard drive will be stored off site, in case something happens to the CDs and books.

The computer workstation will be accessible to those who use a wheelchair.

The vision for this project has multiple elements: to increase accessibility to public records, reduce staff time helping people access records, reduce the time it takes customers to access information, reduce paper and ink/toner waste, preserve the original documents (which are valuable historical records) and store a copy off site in case of fire or other disaster (the vault is fire proof, but paper records are easily damaged or destroyed).

See Attachment 2, Vendor Bid, for bid and a more detailed project description.

DOCUMENT IMAGING
SCANNERS
SOFTWARE
SERVICE SUPPORT
SCANNING SERVICES
Microfilm Imaging Systems, Inc.

2530 Harney Street • Omaha, NE 68131
(402) 346-7211 • 800-346-1365
Fax (402) 346-6643
www.MicrofilmImaging.com

Thursday, March 24, 2011

Theresa McKeenman
Garden County Clerk
P.O. Box
Oshkosh, NE 69154

Dear Theresa,

I am pleased to submit our quotation for scanning books for the Garden County Register of Deeds office.

I believe there are approximately 170 books to be scanned within the Deeds, Mortgages, Miscellaneous and Gas Lien books.
Books are scanned as multi-page tiff images. Basically we scan the book as a book but we do not index every filing within the book. Microsoft Imaging that comes with Office or other viewers will simply reach into the book and display the page for the user.

Investment 170 books at $50.00 per book = $8500.00

I believe there are 10 Numeric Index Books to be scanned.
These books will be indexed by legal description:
Township, Range and Section
City and Subdivision
The various groups will be scanned as multi-page tiffs.
Color or Gray-tone will be used to ensure that every last pencil mark can be read.
Investment 10 books at $685.00 per book $6850.00

If the goal is to stop using the paper books (recommended) we can install a retrieval station in the vault.
We want the users to easily view a specific page (image) within the numeric index book using a PC display number 1 (22" wide). The user will view the document type and book and page from an image of the old index page.
The actual filing will instantly appear on display number 2 (22" tall). The book number will be opened with a double click and the page number will be key entered.
If this system is connected to the network, Wendy should have the same access to these two document groups.

If you think about it, the work table and computer retrieval system can bump right up against the book racks. After all, we won't need to pull the books once this system is in place.
This is not a sit and read station. This is a get the info, print the document and get out, station!

Investment	equipment, software, installation and training	$3775.00

A 360 gigabyte external hard drive will be included with the scanning service. This is a wonderful tool to ensure that everything scanned today is off-site the same day. When we are finished the hard drive can be sent to a neighbor Register of Deeds for off-site security storage.
If Garden County has a disaster, the Register of Deeds in Morrill County can have 95% of the documents available in the time it takes to plug in the hard drive.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this quotation. If there are questions, please call me on my cell phone at 402-690-7063.

Sincerely,

Curtis Reiter
President
Microfilm Imaging Systems, Inc.

Attachment 2a

Budget

Based on the vendor's bid, the budget will be as follows:

Scanning Services	
170 Books at $50.00/book	$ 8,500.00
10 Index Books at $685.00/book	$ 6,850.00
Equipment, Software, Installation & Training	$ 3,775.00
Sub-Total	$19,125.00
Overages	$ 845.00
Total	$20,000.00

Attachment 3

Part II.11. All of Garden County's Deed, Mortgage, Miscellaneous and other records are in large, heavy books, some of which are very old (1880's). They take up a lot of space when someone is doing research. They are stored on shelves in a small vault with two tables, computer station (for records since 2007 and other State applications) and the County copy machine, which means there is very little work space. Putting records on CDs will increase record accessibility dramatically. It will allow researchers to access information more quickly and facilitate their work so it doesn't take as much time as hauling out big books. Since some of the books are on high shelves, it will definitely make the information more accessible to people who are short (especially women), who have back problems or who may have other disabilities. It will also make it easier for staff to serve people wanting to do research and reduce the time it takes to educate them on how to access materials.

Making the records computer accessible is the first step towards eventually having records on line, which will increase accessibility even more.

Not only will this project make records more accessible to the public, but to the other County offices as well, especially the Assessor's and Clerk's offices. Both offices use the records on a daily basis.

With a printer at the workstation, the amount of paper and ink wastage will be reduced. Trying to make copies from the books leads to a lot of wasted paper and ink, not to mention time and effort.

GARDEN COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

PO Box 486
Oshkosh, NE 69154

Robert Radke, Chairman
Ronald Shearer, Commissioner
Casper Corfield, Commissioner

Tuesday, April 5, 2011

Nebraska State Records Board
440 S 8th St Ste 210
Lincoln, NE 68508

To Whom it May Concern,

As Chairman of the Garden County Commissioners, I am fully aware of how budget crunches and loss of State Aid will affect our county. Garden County doesn't have a large population, but we have prided ourselves on keeping up with the technology in the ever advancing world. The downturn of the economy has made this effort more difficult. This grant would provide for another step in our advancement. We would be able to have all of our land and commissioner records more accessible to the public as well as the employees.

There are several advantages to having these records scanned and available to the public by kiosk. First, it would save wear and tear on our books, some of which date back to the 1800's. These books are priceless and can never be replaced. Some of our old books are in bad shape as it is, and this would eliminate any more destruction of these books.

Second, the kiosk would make retrieving records much more time efficient. The public as well as courthouse personnel would be able to search far faster with "text searching" available. For instance, they could search for the name "Johnson" and have record of every recording with that name.

Finally, I see this as a stepping stone for future advancement. Having these records scanned will put our county ahead of the curve for the possibility of having our records available online in the future.

I'm asking you to consider Garden County for this grant. As I mentioned previously, our County budgets continue to tighten and will leave little room for projects like this one. Without financial help, this project will not be possible.

Sincerely,

Robert Radke

Robert Radke
Garden County Commissioner

OFFICE OF
COUNTY CLERK OF MORRILL COUNTY
Kathleen L. Brandt, County Clerk, Register of Deeds & Election Commissioner
Becky A. Fields, Deputy County Clerk, Lisa Peters, Deputy Election Commissioner
P. O. Box 610 Ph. 308-262-0860 Fax 308-262-1469
Bridgeport, Nebraska 69336-0610
e-mail clerk@morrill.nacone.org

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Steve Erdman, Chairperson
Jeff Metz
Gary Oltmann

April 4, 2011

Nebraska State Records Board

RE: Grant for Garden County

To Whom It May Concern:

As a County Clerk, I have been converting my records to CD Rom for the last few years. This enables me to transfer those records to the State Archives without the use of microfilm. It has been very costly and time consuming. Garden County has applied for a grant for this very purpose and I feel that they would benefit from it greatly. We are living in an age of technology and this is the wave of the future to preserve the records and be able to transmit them without the use of paper.

Please consider Garden County for this grant.

Sincerely,

Kathleen L. Brandt

Kathleen L. Brandt
Morirll County Clerk

Janet L. Shaul
Garden County Assessor
P O Box 468
Oshkosh, NE 69154
308-772-4464

Fax 308-772-0123 **gcasr1@embarqmail.com**

April 7, 2011

Nebraska State Records Board
440 S 8th Street, Suite 210
Lincoln, Ne 68508

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing in regards to a project Garden County is in hopes of implementing. Our County Clerk/Register of Deeds would like to get all recordings scanned, and create electronic access to the public records. This would include deeds, mortgages, liens, index books, Commissioners minutes and numerous other recordings. Many of the books date to the early 1900s, and are the old pages, written in calligraphy and kept in leather binders. The books have become extremely worn, and constant use only exasperates their deterioration. They simply will not withstand much further use. If these records were scanned on CDs and for public access, not only would this service be invaluable to the public, it would also save on the wear and tear of the historic, unreplacable records books.

Research has determined that the cost of scanning would be around $20,000. While this may not be a huge amount in some terms, our county is very near the levy limit and money is simply not available for this type of project. Being a very rural county, we do not have a lot of valuation, but do have many county roads, etc. that take precedence in budgetary concerns.

As County Assessor, my staff and I use the deed books, etc. daily to keep our records accurate and current. If we were to receive a grant from you, it would benefit not only court house employees, but all realtors, appraisers, abstractors, and all interested public. We ask that you please consider Garden County as a recipient in your grant program.

Thank you for your time,

Janet L. Shaul

Janet L. Shaul
Garden County Assessor

Premier Abstract & Title, Inc.

104 West 1st Street
P.O. Box 73
Ogallala, NE 69153
308-284-3592
877-889-1483 Toll Free
308-284-4592 Fax
bernie@premierabstract.net

April 13, 2011

Nebraska State Records Board
440 S. 8th St., Ste 210
Lincoln, NE 68508

Re: Garden County records

Dear Sir/Madam:

It is my understanding the Garden County Clerk/Register of Deeds is applying for a grant to enable her office to transfer all records to CD in an effort to permanently save the County records from further damage by continually removing documents from various record books.

As a title agent/abstracter, I work in numerous counties in Western Nebraska where records have been permanently stored on CD and computer hard drives. When accessing the records, it saves me an enormous amount of time when I can simply click on a book and page and print the documents I require for my file rather than remove the document from a book and make photo copies.

Also, as a title agent and abstracter, I greatly respect the stored documents in the counties and in order to keep these documents from further destruction, the current storage system must be replaced with a more technological solution. With records dating back to the county's formation, these records are the entire history of any county. I commend Teresa McKeeman for taking appropriate action to preserve her county's history and would highly recommend Garden County receiving funds to do so.

Best regards,

Bernie DeForest

BERNIE DeFOREST
President