



# Building homes for the future

BY MONA WEATHERLY

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**BROKEN BOW** - Some of the houses that are part of the Broken Bow/Nebraska Investment Finance Authority (NIFA) Housing project are almost finished and will be move-in ready this spring, according to Stuart Fox, Chairman of Custer Economic Development Corporation (CEDC).

"The first two homes are nearing completion with most interior work completed," Fox said. "We anticipate the first two homes to be ready for occupancy around the middle of May."

Fox said there has been interest in the homes but as of yet, the houses are not yet sold. They are priced at \$199,000. "The prices are negotiable and with our partnership with NIFA, some borrowers may qualify for reduced interest loans," Fox said.

Construction began last fall. Custer Campus, Inc., a 501c2 non-profit organization under the CEDC (501c3), closed on the land in September, 2016. When Gov. Pete Ricketts was in Broken Bow Nov. 4, 2016, for an official aground breaking, basements had been dug. Building has progressed and two houses, one with soothing blue siding and the other a restful taupe, stand on the east side of Pawnee Street in southeast Broken Bow. The basement for a third house is one the west side of Pawnee Street.

Specs released on the

houses last fall show single family homes designed with 1,286 square feet of ground level living space with three bedrooms, two full baths, an open living room-dining room-kitchen concept, and quality E-rated appliances. There will also be a full unfinished basement, attached two car garage, driveway, sidewalk, covered porch and underground sprinkler system at each home.

"Construction has went great," Fox said. "This is a local project with lots of local partners, including contractors, lumber yards, the City, Broken Bow Housing Authority, real estate agents and banks, to name a few."

"The Broken Bow Housing Authority are a part of the project and we are deeply appreciative of all the partnerships...NIFA, CEDC, our local contractors, Stefens Law Office, the Broken Bow Housing Authority, Ideal Realty, and most importantly, our local banks,"

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CEDC Executive Director Deb McCaslin said. Bruning State Bank, Custer Federal State Bank and Nebraska State Bank & Trust Co. are providing financing.

Another local commitment is from Mo Hunsberger of Ideal Realty. She has volunteered to help show and sell the houses at no commission.

The housing project is part of an effort to alleviate a serious housing shortage in Broken Bow and Custer County. It's not something unique to this area, according to Fox. "It's a statewide problem. I have served on a workforce housing task force through the Nebraska Banker's Association and I'm proud to be a small part of the progress happening in Custer County," he said.

In the last few years, Broken Bow has added at least 31 rental units and 12 single family, according to Fox. "In addition, there are another 18 rental units under construction along with the three single family homes plus town homes under

construction by Cornerstone Estates," he added

An additional eight homes could be build within the current Broken Bow/NIFA Housing Project and there is yet another project in the works. "The senior project could add 24 more units to Custer County," Fox said.

The senior units he referred to are a potential joint project between Callaway and Broken Bow to build ten duplexes in Broken Bow and two in Callaway as low income rentals. "Our application went in this week and we are excited," Fox said last Friday. "This is a unique project where we are partnering with Callaway. Without partnering with a larger community, it would be virtually impossible do a tax credit project in a community the size of Callaway."

Anyone considering making one of the newly built homes on Pawnees Street their home for the future can contact Mo Hunsberger at Ideal Realty at 308-870-1406.