



December 3, 2019

To whom it may concern:

My name is Leslie Clark, and I am the project director of Honeybees in the Heartland, a county-wide public art project. I am also a board member of the Auburn Development Council and the Nemaha County Development Foundation Fund.

Auburn is a small town community in Nemaha County and is desirous to have a more vibrant art scene as well as seeing an impact in both tourism and economic growth through pop up art shows, pop up art galleries, monthly art walks and more. We hope to make these types of projects and events a more permanent part of our community.

Benson First Friday has seen great success in the exact areas we also are looking to have success in. Implementing a First Friday such as Benson's will attract tourists and different types of creative talent. Creating this type of environment can lead to more entrepreneurs and startups. With an influx of visitors, tourists, and artists in our area, we would see more jobs generated and economic activities would increase. That is a win all the way around, and that is exactly what we're looking for.

To have a thriving art community such as Benson's can serve our community very well and help bring character and uniqueness to our area. What a cultural hub we would be.

Benson has traveled this road of seeing what works and what doesn't in their art walks. They could be such a resource to others, and we would be looking to them to share their passion for art as well as tapping into their knowledge and guidance in starting such an endeavor in our area.

As they say, imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, and we hope to not only imitate Benson's First Fridays but also imitate their great success in all these areas.

We would love to see Benson be a recipient of this grant. With it they not only continue impacting their community, they will impact my community, and all others who turn to them to find the same success.

Thank you,

Leslie Clark
Project Director
Honeybees in the Heartland