South Dakota Housing Development Authority
Special Achievement
South Dakota Rural Housing Playbook

The 2003 South Dakota Statewide Housing Needs Analysis indicated a need for 13,000 additional owner occupied housing units by the year 2007. While the two MSAs in the state have been successful in keeping up with the need, the rural areas have not. The reason for this lack of response to the need is related to the lack of knowledge as to how to proceed with a housing development. The South Dakota Housing Development Authority (SDHDA) receives numerous calls from people who acknowledge a need for housing in their community, but do not know how to go about addressing the need. Often they will focus on the resources available rather than the actual need sometimes creating a dangerous approach if the need and the resources do not line up. Housing that is not needed can be developed and many valuable resources can be wasted in the process. The South Dakota Rural Housing Playbook (Playbook) was designed to help avoid this problem and to encourage development of appropriate housing in communities of need.

The Playbook is the result of a core group of federal, state, and non-profit business leaders, finance professionals and housing practitioners coming together to develop the concept, processes, and support network necessary for creating housing in rural areas and pulling together the needed resources to make it happen. After receiving an RECD grant from HUD to develop the Playbook, it was launched at SDHDA's Statewide Housing Conference in November of 2008.

The purpose of the Playbook is to assist rural South Dakota communities with housing development by utilizing the Playbook (using a sports analogy of a playbook) to help explain the housing development process, by directing communities to appropriate technical assistance and resources to help them develop housing, and by fostering and maintaining relationships among community representatives and technical assistance and resource providers until the housing project is completed. To further enhance the effectiveness of the Playbook, a Rural Housing Coordinator was hired to market the playbook and act as a facilitator to connect communities to the resources they need.

Although the Playbook has relevance to all areas of the state, the areas particularly targeted for receiving assistance are rural communities with populations of 5,000 or fewer. Inquiries from communities often center around developing affordable housing and workforce housing, with communities particularly concerned about retaining or attracting residents that will help keep their small communities viable.

The Playbook has been introduced to more than 350 individuals from businesses, economic, and housing development organizations in over 100 South Dakota communities. To date, 131 individuals representing 65 communities have registered for and received copies of the Playbook by downloading it from the Playbook web site or on CD at various introductory presentations.

Initially, success is measured by the number of communities who participate in introductory meetings and the number of people who request the Playbook. A second level of success is measured by the number of communities that have become engaged in the Playbook process. So far, communities that have been introduced to the Playbook process have expressed their appreciation for a new understanding of how complicated housing development can be. They realize the process can take a great deal of time and effort. Many have reported that they were happy to learn that they were on the right track with their efforts, while others were pleased to learn what steps they missed, and what next steps and considerations are important. It is anticipated that the Playbook will continue to be a catalyst for discussion, for action, for change,

and for generating excitement in communities that engage in the process. Truly, we won't be able to measure success of this program until we can count the number of families that are housed in homes created in rural areas as a result of this effort. In the mean time, we are content in knowing that rural communities do not have to feel that they are left to struggle with the complicated process of developing housing all on their own. They can learn from other communities' successes and refer to step by step processes and checklists that have been created specifically for them to ensure that they are "playing the game" appropriately.