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[www.goldenbeltcf.org](http://www.goldenbeltcf.org)

For more information:  
Christy Tustin 620.792.3000 [christy@goldenbeltcf.org](mailto:christy@goldenbeltcf.org)  
Sue Cooper 620.792.3000 [sue@goldenbeltcf.org](mailto:sue@goldenbeltcf.org)



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### **GBCF begins Forever Initiative in Three Area Counties**

GREAT BEND, Kan. – After visiting with central Kansans during last year’s listening tour, the Golden Belt Community Foundation (GBCF) decided to start a new program to enhance quality-of-life projects far into the future.

It is called the Forever Initiative. The goal is to help build community-wide or county-wide endowments, thereby creating permanent resources and inspiring local philanthropy with the support of strong local leaders, said Christy Tustin, GBCF executive director.

The program is available to Pawnee, Rush and Stafford counties, and all the communities within those counties.

“We have \$300,000 in matching funds available for gifts to endowment funds,” Tustin said. “We hope this opportunity sparks some interest.”

For each dollar raised, the GBCF will match with 50 cents. After the endowment funds are built and established, the funds will be used to support a variety of projects. These could involve parks, playgrounds, libraries, schools, beautification efforts, historical preservation or other projects.

The size of matching grants available to applicant communities or counties will vary widely but they generally will fall between \$25,000 and \$100,000. Matching funds will be added to the endowment funds.

Currently, endowment funds exist at the county level “but unfortunately, they are undersized to provide substantial support to projects and organizations,” Tustin noted.

“Endowments provide a sustainable stream of funding,” she added. “Forever Initiative funds can meet the needs we know about today and also those we cannot even imagine right now.”

Endowments are funds set aside for the long-term benefit of an organization or community. The principal amount is permanently protected, while the fund’s income is used to support charitable causes within a designated area.

“Imagine what your community could do with \$5,000, \$10,000 or more every year,” Tustin said. “As the endowment grows, the amount available to improve your community grows.”

The decision to apply at the county level or community level is up to local residents.

“Whatever works for each applicant is fine with us,” Tustin said. “It can be county-wide or an individual town. Either way, this is a joint effort.”

“Your community voice is important,” Tustin continued. “We will seek input during individual and group discussions, community meetings and through online submissions regarding how funds from the endowment are used. Our board of directors and staff want your endowment to support what your community believes is important.”

Tustin is available to speak with individuals and groups about the details of this new program.

The first step is for communities or counties to decide to apply to establish an endowment for their area.

Anyone interested in learning more about the Forever Initiative is encouraged to contact the GBCF by calling 620-792-3000. Applications are available at the office, 1307 Williams, Great Bend, or online at [www.goldenbeltcf.org](http://www.goldenbeltcf.org) and are due October 1st, 2017. At \$21 million in total assets and more than 160 funds under management, the Golden Belt Community Foundation has been connecting people who care to causes that matter since 1996. Golden Belt Community Foundation exists to provide non-profit organizations in central Kansas with a permanent source of support and to serve as a vehicle for charitable giving for donors. GBCF serves the counties of Barton, Pawnee, Rush, and Stafford. For more information about Golden Belt Community Foundation, call (620) 792-3000 or visit their website at [www.goldenbeltcf.org](http://www.goldenbeltcf.org).

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