

Sunken Gardens project wins award

By the Lincoln Journal Star

The Lincoln Sunken Gardens renovation project received an award from the governor as part of National Community Development Week.

Gov. Dave Heineman presented several awards for outstanding efforts by communities in the areas of economic development and community revitalization. The projects rec were tied to the Community Development Block Grant Program in Nebraska.

The Sunken Gardens project received the Metropolitan Award. Receiving Lincoln's Honorable Mention Awards were the IMPACT Project, Russ's Market Facade Improvement, and Havelock Pedestrian Link and Parking Lot.

The 73-year-old, nationally known park had aged, and safety, accessibility, and maintenance had become concerns. Restoration of the gardens involved a \$1.7 million fundraising campaign. The city provided \$200,000. The remaining funds came from private donations.

The Sunken Gardens project included a new handicapped-accessible entrance, an entry pavilion, a restored cascading water feature and renovated lily pools, among other features.

Over the past five years, \$72.6 million in Community Development Block Grants has been invested in 400 projects statewide, sparking \$540 million in state, local and private investments.

The block grant program helps communities update city infrastructure, plan for future development and attract new jobs.