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A Fiscal Model Program Theory Proposal for Training Reentry Citizen Ex-Convicts to
Remodel Abandoned Houses

By

James A. Hanson

A DISSERTATION

Presented to the Faculty of
The Graduate College at the University of Nebraska
In Partial Fulfillment of Requirements
For the Degree of Doctor of Education

Major: Educational Studies
(Educational Leadership and Higher Education)

Under the Supervision of Professor Brent Cejda

University of Nebraska Lincoln

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A Fiscal Model Program Theory Proposal for Training Reentry Citizen Ex-Convicts to
Remodel Abandoned Houses

James A. Hanson, Ed.D.

University of Nebraska, 2015

Advisor: Brent Cejda

The purpose of this study was to develop and examine a fiscal program theory model and proposal for training reentry citizen ex-convicts to remodel abandoned houses. A sustainable program theory model describes ways that training and employing these citizens to remodel abandoned houses may be expected to have benefits to a community. The recently released ex-convicts will learn a construction trade, earn a sustainable wage, and the once-abandoned houses will be returned to the city tax rolls. Vocational education and workforce training are key to this program.

The literature indicates that national jobless rates for recently released inmates is well above 50% in many parts of the U.S. (Greenfield, 2011). The literature also indicates that there are no programs in which home building inside-the-walls successfully supported an outside-the-walls program, once the ex-convicts are released.

The methodology used for this study was a program proposal model which was grounded in a corresponding logic model. The program theory model illustrates the ways in which proposed inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes' *IF-THEN* evidence will establish connections between what is expected and what is to be accomplished (Chen, 2005; Wilder Research, 2009). This research proposes a business model that is intended to become self-sufficient, one that will eventually produce a sustainable capital stream.

Once established as a sustainable business model, it can be expanded to train more ex-convicts, rehabilitate more homes, add to community resources, and reduce recidivism.

The framework for this model was based upon Maslow's hierarchy of needs and Becker's human capital theory. Through this theoretical framework, additional long-term benefits to this in developing and examining this model include stabilized neighborhoods and improving public schools, anticipating lower incarceration costs, reduced demand for prison construction, a decrease in incarceration and recidivism rates and the consequences to society. This program also has state and national implications.

Dedication

This study is dedicated to the many individuals who have touched my life. It is difficult for me to express my gratitude for their support in the journey I began more than 24 years ago. I am particularly grateful for my family. From boyhood, and as an Eagle Scout, I have always appreciated the values my parents, the late Howard and Marie Hanson, instilled in me. I will be forever indebted for their kindness, acceptance, and love. They taught me respect for quality and success, and to be persistent in reaching my goals. My parents practiced the Golden Rule, and I have tried to follow their example. My father also taught me the master carpentry skills that became the foundation of this dissertation. I would further like to acknowledge my three siblings, that unconditionally shared their love and support for me, through the years. My sister, Sheri Ward, my late sister, Colleen Caldwell and my late brother, Howard (JR) Hanson, that also was a wonderful role model in my life, in my childhood.

I also dedicate this work to the most beautiful woman ever on this planet, my dear, loving late wife Beverly JoAnn. She loved me unconditionally and stood beside me for 32 years. She was with me the day my journey began 24 years ago. Beverly was as beautiful on the inside as she was on the outside. Her huge heart always had room for those who needed a second chance. She always believed in me, and she stood by her man and her family. Bev is smiling from heaven, and she will be with me in spirit forever. My children and I have all dearly missed her unconditional love, support, and humor, over the nearly 11 years she has been gone. We were all very blessed having an angel like her on earth.

Dedication is also appropriate for my two awesome, wonderful, loving children and the granddaughter I have been blessed with: my son Jeffrey, my daughter Melissa, and my two and one-half year old granddaughter, Coltlyn Beverly. Jeff and Melissa have been very supportive of my journey, and I know that Coltlyn, too, will eventually appreciate it as well. I am very proud of my children and we are a very close, loving family. They know I have earned this, but they can't wait to call me "Dr. Daddio."

Finally, I would like to dedicate my research and this dissertation to all the inmates who will be released, and who will benefit from this work. As they become motivated, trained, educated, and purposeful members of society, I know they will find a way to defy gravity and also find purpose, so they can once again fly. Through this study, we can, through training, education, and developing their self-respect, lower recidivism rates not only at the state level, but nationwide as well.

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Chapter One

Introduction

I am a teacher, a builder, and a fully pardoned ex-felon. In the last 24 years during my own personal life's journey, from the days of little hope, by darkness, I have found purpose, hope and self-empowerment within myself. Others have believed in me. I have embarked on a fulfilling journey.

I have never lost sight of my mission. I have longed to share and make a difference in the world. I want people to help one another, to believe that anything is possible. I hope that my contribution will make a difference, one that can be paid forward in generations to come by providing purpose, real-world jobs with a sustainable wage, and construction training for recently released inmates or reentry citizens. It is possible for this group of people to rebuild homes and their own lives as productive citizens. My personal success on this journey can be attributed to never giving up, and to constantly attempting to open doors. This is a journey that will continue for the rest of my life. There are no limits, in my opinion, to the possible positive social and economic effects that this program could offer.

Employing Reentry Citizens and Ex-Convicts to Remodel Abandoned Houses

I have been given burdens and opportunities in my life, but the burdens have taught me more. The lessons I have learned in my darkest hours have been the ones that have propelled me forward. I have a unique understanding of the difficulties that convicted ex-felons face when they integrate into society. It is my gratitude for this understanding that has allowed me to understand my mission, which is to develop a

sustainable program theory model for workforce training. The purpose of this model is to explain and describe how training and employing reentry citizens/ex-convicts to remodel abandoned houses and will provide benefits to a community.

The Training Population and Curriculum

All the reentry citizens will be under the leadership of Mr. Jim Campbell, president and owner of Operation Phoenix, Inc. Mr. Campbell and his staff will provide teaching, leadership, and training. They also will initiate the curriculum and the life skills structure for rebuilding the lives for the trainees. Operation Phoenix proposes a real-world, sustainable, construction trade curriculum. This curriculum includes hands-on training and entrepreneurship in a variety of construction trades for recently released felons/reentry citizens. The organization's mission is to help reentry citizens find purpose through self-empowerment. As they reclaim their lives through the success of their own accomplishment, I hope that they will become participating citizens. Unlike any other program currently operating in the national or state penal system, these men will be coached and mentored in building trades and in jobs skills throughout their journey.

Putting Rehabilitated Houses Back on the Tax Rolls

According to the Omaha City Building Department (2013), there are more than 750 vacant houses in North Omaha, Nebraska. Most are slated for demolition. The current cost of demolition is \$10-12,000. (City of Omaha Building Department, 2014). Besides rebuilding the lives of these ex-convicts and re-building neighborhoods, this program would also allow the houses they rebuild to be put back on the tax rolls as

income back to the city, saving the city the cost of demolition, and adding to the tax rolls. The *Omaha World-Herald* (Burback, 2014) found that the City of Omaha only has staff, budget, and resources to deal with about 20% of these homes. As a part of this study, my intent is to show the savings to the City of Omaha is a potential “win-win” for all, because these homes, once rehabilitated, would sell at an affordable price of about \$90,000-\$95,000. The potential benefit from providing this opportunity of personal home ownership for qualified purchasers could further support the idea of providing the ex-convicts a second chance in life. Through the process of empowering, useful work, they can reclaim their lives and slow the ever-present revolving door scenario of recidivism (W. Wakefield, personal communication, March 30, 2013).

A Reentry Program for Inmates and Parolees, and the Vocational and Life Skills Program

Nebraska Legislative Bill LB 907 was a bill that was written in part to create the Nebraska Justice Reinvestment Working Group [NJRWG], a reentry program for inmates and parolees. The Vocational and Life Skills Program, established through LB 907, became a major priority during the 2014 Nebraska Legislative session, which took place between January 2014 and June 2014. There were three crucial and identifiable reasons for this urgency. First, this bill was expedited and unanimously approved into law to address concerns about the Nebraska Department of Corrections statistics. These statistics showed that the Nebraska prisons were at 156% capacity (NDCS, 2014). Second was the scandal involving the mistaken early release of dozens of inmates, and third was the identified lack of vocational training programs required to prepare inmates

for release from prison and for their return to society. Nebraska LB 907 was passed in June 2014, and this bill allowed the prison system to once again provide areas of vocational education training for the inmates while they are still serving their prison sentences. Future vocational programs will be initiated through LB 907; they will be examined and their effectiveness and utility will be evaluated. (L. Wayne, personal communication, January 10, 2014)

Many vocational-type programs have been absent from the prison system for more than 25 years. The Vocational and Life Skills (VLS) Program grant review team will consist of individuals from each of the following: Nebraska Department of Correctional Services (NDCS) Reentry Initiative; NDCS staff; State Probation; NDCS Adult Parole Administration; and the Board of Parole. According to the provisions defined in LB907, funds will immediately be appropriated to the Office of Probation Administration for new reporting centers and for expanded services for probationers. Funding will also be available for mental health services, specialized substance abuse supervision (SSAS), and problem-solving court participants. Under the Programming Clause, the VLS Program within the Nebraska Department of Correctional Services (NDCS), will be administered in consultation with the Board of Parole. The LB907 also requires NDCS to develop a reentry program, and for the NDCS to create a reentry plan for each inmate. LB907 also includes several parole enhancements, including a new reporting requirement, new duties for parole officers, and requirements for the parole administration's use of administrative sanctions.

Funding

The programming section of LB 907 requires that the Nebraska Department of Correctional Services (NDCS) works with the Nebraska Board of Parole in order to develop a Vocational and Life Skills Program. Section 14 provides that NDCS, in consultation with the Board of Parole, shall develop a Vocational and Life Skills Program, and shall develop rules and regulations for the program. Section 14 also creates the Vocational and Life Skills Fund, requires a quarterly report, and details the reporting requirements. Up to 30% of the fund may be used for staffing, and at least 70% shall be used for programming.

Section 19 appropriates \$3.5 million to NDCS for the Vocational and Life Skills Program (LB 907) that further identifies the specific roles and understanding for the Nebraska Department of Correctional Services and Board of Parole. LB 907 clearly improves the reentry program. It requires that the administrator of Section 13 of LB 907 will always be in consultation with the Board of Parole, and with the board will develop a sound reentry program for inmates and individuals who have been discharged within the prior 18 months from any NDCS facility. LB 907 defines the Nebraska Department of Correctional Services Reentry Plan. Section 17 of LB 907 amends section 83-1, 107, requiring the Nebraska Department of Correctional Services (NDCS) to create a reentry plan for each inmate, which is separate from an individual's personalized program plan and parole program plan. Finally, NDCS shall ensure that an individual's reentry plan is complete or near completion before the individual has served 80% of his or her sentence. LB 907 further defines the Parole Administration:

reporting requirement, Parole Officer duties, administrative sanctions LB907 includes several provisions to enhance the effectiveness of Nebraska's parole system.

Definition of Terms

Corrections—Corrections shall mean the treatment and rehabilitation of offenders through a program involving penal custody, parole, and probation (Office of the U.S. Attorneys, n.d.a).

Community Based Corrections or Community Based Services—Community Based Corrections or Community Based Services shall mean when an inmate is released into the community from prison, it is the supervision of criminal offenders in the resident population, as opposed to confining offenders in secure correctional facilities. The two main types of community corrections supervision are probation and parole (Office of the U.S. Attorneys, n.d.b).

Ex-Convict—Ex-Convict means a released prisoner or inmate that has been set free from incarceration in prison and has served his or her time set forth and required and determined by the court of law (Discover Corrections, n.d.a).

Felony—A felony shall mean a crime by statute as declared by the nature of punishment imposed. Serious felonies are considered rape and murder. Some of the lowest levels would be on possession of a firearm by a felon. Examples would include robbing a bank, hitting or striking a law or police officer or the act of attempted theft by deception (Discover Corrections, n.d.b).

Imprisoned population—Imprisoned population shall mean the population of inmates confined in prison or other facilities under the jurisdiction of the state or Federal Bureau of Prisons (Discover Corrections, n.d.c).

Incarcerate—Incarcerate means to put in prison and that individual will then be subject to confinement (Discover Corrections, n.d.d).

Incarcerated population—Incarcerated population shall mean the population of inmates confined in a prison or a jail. This may also include halfway houses, boot camps, weekend programs, and other facilities in which individuals are locked up overnight (Discover Corrections, n.d.e).

Institutional corrections—Institutional corrections shall mean those persons housed in secure correctional facilities. There are many different types of correctional facilities, operated by different government entities. Local jails are operated by county or municipal authorities and typically hold offenders for short periods ranging from a single day to a year. Prisons serve as long-term confinement facilities and are only run by the 50 state governments and the federal Bureau of Prisons. Private correctional facilities also operate under contracts for a wide variety of local, state, and federal agencies. Other correctional facilities are operated by special jurisdictions such as the U.S. Armed Forces, U.S. territories and federal agencies such as Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (Discover Corrections, n.d.f).

Nebraska Department of Corrections—Nebraska Department of Corrections shall mean the Department of Corrections for the State of Nebraska, designated to be in charge of the prisons, corrections and rehabilitation systems, facilities, prisoners, and employees.

In Nebraska, the Director for the Department of Corrections is appointed by the Governor and must be approved by a committee of the Nebraska Legislature (Nebraska Department of Correctional Services, n.d.a).

Offender—Offender shall mean the perpetrator of a crime; this term usually applies to crimes involving direct contact between the victim and the offender (Discover Corrections, n.d.g).

Operation Phoenix, Inc.—Operation Phoenix, Inc. (n.d.), is a for-profit transitional construction training program based in Omaha Nebraska under the direction and vision of its founder and president, Mr. Jim Campbell. The primary mission is to train released inmates or reentry citizens outside the walls in the construction trades by rehabbing, remodeling, and rebuilding houses that have been determined to be uninhabitable. In the process, the students will learn the various construction trades, use of tools, construction math, safety, and rebuild these houses to place them back on the city tax rolls, as they are attempting to rebuild their own lives. All houses would be remodeled and rehabbed onsite. There is a registered architect that is employed by Operation Phoenix and part of this vision and process. This program is only proposal stage.

Pardon—Pardon shall mean the act of officially saying that someone who was judged to be guilty of a crime will be allowed to go free and will not be punished. In the State of Nebraska, there is a three member Pardons Board, consisting of the Governor, State Attorney General, and Secretary of State. A convicted felon must wait 10 years before he or she can go in front of the Pardon's Board for a Full Pardon and restore civil

rights. The Full Pardon does not ex-sponge the record of the original conviction, but it does restore the civil rights of that individual (Discover Corrections, n.d.).

Pardons Board—In Nebraska, Pardons Board shall mean that there is a three-member board consisting of the Governor, State Attorney General, and the State Secretary of State. An individual must wait 10 years after his or her conviction to go in front of the Pardons Board to request a Full Pardon. Upon the Pardon Board's review, they will determine if a Full Pardon shall be granted, if all requirements have been met, and if all civil rights should be restored (Nebraska Department of Correctional Services, n.d.b).

Parole—Parole refers to criminal offenders who are conditionally released from prison to serve the remaining portion of their sentence in the community. Prisoners may be released to parole by a parole board decision (discretionary release/discretionary parole), according to provisions of a statute (mandatory release/mandatory parole), through other types of post-custody conditional supervision, or as the result of a sentence to a term of supervised release. In the federal system, a term of supervised release is a sentence to a fixed period of supervision in the community that follows a sentence to a period of incarceration in federal prison, both of which are ordered at the time of sentencing by a federal judge. Parolees can have a number of different supervision statuses including active supervision, which means they are required to regularly report to a parole authority in person, by mail, or by telephone. Parolees may be on an inactive status, which means they are excluded from regularly reporting. For instance, some may receive a reduction in supervision, possibly due to compliance or meeting all required

conditions before the parole sentence terminates, and therefore may be moved from an active to inactive status. Other supervision includes parolees who have only financial conditions remaining, who have absconded, or who have active warrants. Parolees are also typically required to fulfill certain conditions and adhere to specific rules of conduct while in the community. Failure to comply with any of the conditions may result in a return to incarceration (Office of the U.S. Attorneys, n.d.c).

Parole Board—Parole Board shall mean that in Nebraska, the Parole Board consists of five full-time members. The *Nebraska Criminal Justice Review* (Nebraska Board of Parole, 2014) a quarterly publication, indicates that there is currently one vacancy. These members are appointed by the Governor and approved by the Nebraska Legislature. By statute, at least one member must identify as a minority and one must have a professional background in corrections. The Governor designates the chairperson. The Board determines when an inmate shall be released or paroled back into society. Each inmate is evaluated individually.

An offender does not apply for parole. After reaching the earliest parole eligibility date, parole is discretionary and based upon the initiative of the board. The purpose of the parole is to protect the rights of society and to provide assistance to the offender, under a period of supervision and education, to reenter the mainstream of society as a productive, law-abiding citizen. Parole does not release the offender from the court (Nebraska Department of Corrections, n.d.c).

Prairie Gold Homes, Inc. (PGH)—Prairie Gold Homes, Inc. (PGH) (n.d.) is a non-profit 501 c (3) prison based construction training program located inside the walls

of the Nebraska State Penitentiary, Lincoln, Nebraska under the direction and leadership of its executive director, Ms. Renee Bauer. Prairie Gold Homes provides training for incarcerated individuals in construction training, with the goal of reducing recidivism rates while training for possible future opportunities in construction, once they are returned back to society. The participants (on average, four to five students at a time) construct modular buildings on prison grounds that are later relocated throughout Nebraska. They also construct site-built homes in the Lincoln area.

Probation—Probation is a status given from the judicial system in various lengths of time to be served by adult and juvenile offenders whom courts place on supervision in the community through a probation agency, generally in lieu of incarceration. Some jurisdictions do sentence probationers to a combined short-term incarceration sentence immediately followed by probation, which is referred to as a split sentence. Probationers can have a number of different supervision statuses including active supervision, which means they are required to regularly report to a probation authority in person, by mail, or by telephone.

Probationers may be on an inactive status, which means they are excluded from regularly reporting and that could be for a number of reasons. For instance, some probationers may be placed on inactive status immediately because the severity of the offense was minimal. Some may receive a reduction in supervision and therefore may be moved from an active to inactive status. Other supervision statuses include probationers who have only financial conditions remaining, or who have active warrants. In many instances, while on probation, offenders are required to fulfill certain conditions of their

supervision (e.g., payment of fines, fees, or court costs, participation in treatment programs) and adhere to specific rules of conduct while in the community. Failure to comply with any conditions can result in incarceration (Office of the U.S. Attorneys, n.d.d).

Prisons—Prisons compared to jail facilities, shall mean longer-term facilities owned by a state or by the Federal Government. Prisons typically hold felons and persons with sentences of more than a year; however, the sentence length may vary by state. Six states (Connecticut, Rhode Island, Vermont, Delaware, Alaska, and Hawaii) have an integrated correctional system that combines jails and prisons. There are a small number of private prisons, facilities that are run by private prison corporations whose services and beds are contracted out by state or the Federal Governments (Office of the U.S. Attorneys, n.d.e).

Prisoners—Prisoners shall mean the inmates that are confined in long-term facilities run by the state or Federal Government or private agencies. Prisoners are typically felons who have received a sentence of incarceration of one year or more. Sentence length may vary by state because a few states have one integrated prison system in which both prison and jail inmates are confined in the same types of facilities (Office of the U.S. Attorneys, n.d.f).

Recidivate—Recidivate describes a released prisoner who re-offends and is sent back to prison for an additional crime. Recidivism is the rate in which this occurs (Office of the U.S. Attorneys, n.d.g).

Recidivism—Recidivism means the act of the repeated crime or relapse into crime. A further definition suggests that it is the chronic tendency toward repetition of criminal or antisocial behavior patterns. The Nebraska 2014 recidivism rate for male inmates average was 35% (Nebraska Department of Corrections, n.d.d).

Reentry Citizen—Reentry citizen means, or is synonymous with, the term for a prisoner released back into society to start his or her life over, and to find purpose in the hope that they will not recidivate, and that they become a productive law abiding citizen and positive contributors to society. This is to be accomplished through the use of programs, practices, and strategies targeted at promoting successful reentry back into the community and avoiding recidivism, better educated and trained (Office of the U.S. Attorneys, n.d.h).

Restorative Justice—Restorative justice is a philosophy and theory of criminal justice that focuses on the rehabilitation of offenders through reconciliation with victims and the community at large. This system, theory and philosophy would include the court system, the law enforcement system, parole and probation, housing, employment, and family. These reentry citizens or ex-cons need to be coached and mentored during this process. This often has not been the norm. They need to further be better educated and trained (Discover Corrections, n.d.h).

Reintegration—Reintegration means the process of restoration or restorative justice, by returning one's mind to an integrated state as an ex-offender is released back into and to be accepted by society (Office of the U.S. Attorneys, n.d.i).

State prisons—State prisons means prison facilities run by state correctional authorities. Prisoners housed in these facilities are under the legal authority of the state government and are generally serving a term of more than one year (Office of the U.S. Attorneys, n.d.j).

Total correctional population—Total correctional population means the total or entire correctional population is the population of persons incarcerated, either in a prison or a jail, and persons supervised in the community, either on probation or parole (Office of the U.S. Attorneys, n.d.k).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to:

1. Develop a fiscal model program theory proposal for training reentry citizen ex-convicts to remodel abandoned houses.
2. Develop a sustainable program theory model to explain why training and employing reentry citizen ex-convicts to remodel abandoned houses may be expected to have benefits to a community.

Program Theory Proposal for Training Reentry Citizen Ex-Convicts to Remodel Abandoned Houses

The program proposal model of this study will be grounded in a corresponding logic model that illustrates the program theory through proposed inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes (Chen, 2005; Wilder Research, 2009). Moreover, normative prescriptive program theory and causative descriptive program theory will be based upon Rossi's (1971) time-honored causal intervention and action hypotheses.

IF-THEN evidence will establish connections between what is expected and what is to be accomplished will be examined (Wilder Research, 2009). For this program evaluation, the basic consideration for employment will be those individuals participating in re-entry programs, or, individuals released from the prison system for other than-capital-crimes. These individuals will be employed and receive training by being engaged in the renovation and reclamation of distressed and abandoned houses in the immediate Omaha, area. The *IF-THEN* program evaluation will be based on current building practices, procedures, equipment, and materials to maximize training benefit. The business model is intended not only to attain self-sufficiency, or sustainability, or to build human capital, but also to generate additional monetary capital. If successful, the program will allow expansion in the specific field of general construction, as well as to train these men to remodel, learn a trade, sell, and return these abandoned homes back to the tax rolls. They will thus replace weed-infested and run-down properties and perhaps, build safe neighborhoods with pride. This program is also intended to help rebuild the lives of the ex-offenders by providing them with purpose, empowerment, and real-world jobs with a sustainable income (\$12.00 min/hour). They will receive training in the construction trades, entrepreneurship skills, and life skills.

Organization of the Study

The literature review relevant to this study is presented in Chapter Two. Chapter Three describes the research design, methodology, and procedures used to gather and analyze the data of the study including the logic model that illustrates the program theory through proposed inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes (see Table 1) (Chen, 2005;

Table 1

Program Action Logic Model

Situation	Priorities	Outputs				
		Inputs	Activities	Participants	Outcomes	Impact
		What is Invested	What is Done	Who is Served	Midterm Results	Long Term Impact
Needs	Mission	Resources	Classes	Returning citizen	Changes in ex-	Returning citizen
Assets	Demand	Funding	Meetings	ex-convict	convict skills	ex-convicts
Problems	Mandates	Supplies	Demonstrations	participants	through vocational	become self
Stakeholders	Collaborators	Staff	Hands-on work	Individuals and	employment	sufficient
	Legislation/ Nebraska Bill LB 907--	Abandoned uninhabitable off tax roll houses	Building and construction Establishing a successful work ethic	families who will purchase and occupy houses reconstructed by returning citizen ex-convicts	Changes in ex- convict attitudes through vocational employment Changes in ex- convict knowledge through vocational employment	Returning citizen ex-convicts have lower recidivism rates when their employment Potential is improved
	A bill written in part, to create the Nebraska Justice Reinvestment Working Group. A reentry program for inmates and parolees, and the Vocational and Life Skills Program		Returning citizen ex-convicts who will earn \$12.00 per hour while training and reconstructing abandoned homes	The city of Omaha when houses are returned to the tax rolls	Increased awareness of civic responsibility	Rehabilitated Houses are purchased and occupied

Sources: Program Development and Evaluation Unit: University of Wisconsin (2015); Wilder Research (2009)

Program Development and Evaluation Unit: University of Wisconsin, 2015; Wilder Research, 2009).

Finally, the theoretical framework is Chen's normative prescriptive program theory and causative descriptive program theory. These are based upon causal, intervention, and action hypotheses. They use and examine program theory *IF-THEN* evidence to establish connections between what is expected and what is to be accomplished (Program Development and Evaluation Unit: University of Wisconsin, 2015; Wilder Research, 2009). Chapter Four reports the research results to examine inputs (*What is Invested*) to determine fiscal feasibility, outputs activities (*What is Done*) to determine fiscal feasibility, outputs participation (*Who is Served*) to determine fiscal feasibility, and outcomes (*Results and Impact*) to determine fiscal feasibility. Chapter Five examines the building model description and the importance of training and education for reentry citizens in the vocational skills which help reduce recidivism and restore purpose in their lives.

Chapter Two

Review of the Literature

This chapter will be a general breakdown of the literature that describes some of the programs around the country, including Nebraska. The following is a discussion of some of the literature that was available to me.

Greenhouse (2011) found that released inmates in California, Michigan, New York, and several other states, were concerned about finding jobs after their release from prison. The inmates struggled with the risk of returning to prison because there were so few job opportunities for them upon their return to society. Greenhouse noted that Michigan, for example, spends \$35,000 per year to keep someone in prison, which is equal to the annual cost of educating a University of Michigan student. Greenhouse examined the results from Michigan's rigorous job placement programs as well as the prudent use of parole. State officials noted that they have cut the prison population by 7,500 - about 15% over the past four years. The savings yielded more than \$200 million in annual savings.

Greenhouse (2011) noted that added together, all 50 states and the Federal Government spent approximately \$69 billion per year to house about two million prisoners. Each year, more than 600,000 inmates are released nationwide, but studies show that two-thirds of this population is re-arrested within three years of their release. Greenhouse's examination of employment data indicated that although the nation's overall jobless rate was approximately 9.4% for the general population at that time, unemployment rates for former prisoners between nine months and one year after their

release was 50% or higher. Greenhouse (2011) asserted that federal funds to assist this population were being reduced. In 2008, Congress passed the Second Chance Act in a bipartisan vote. The Second Chance Act provided \$100 million for states to fund reentry programs (Council of State Governments Justice Center, 2015). This legislation was signed into law April 9, 2008.

Jacobs (2008) found that seeking employment for ex-convict- returning citizens in Newark, NJ, was a significant problem. Approximately 2,300 men and women entered the city after being released from prison each year. Jacobs observed that 65% were rearrested within five years. One in six adult residents in Newark had a criminal record. In response to this, Mayor Cory Booker recruited 5,000 companies to hire ex-convicts through the city's workforce development agency. Companies received tax breaks for hiring from this population. Booker also persuaded 300 lawyers to donate their services to felons who were facing legal obstacles to employment. City land was sold at a discount to developers who were willing to employ former prisoners on their construction sites. Even with an initiative this expansive, it remained difficult reverse the thought processes and attitudes of many ex-convict returning citizens. Even in small matters as getting to work on time, many returning citizens face challenges conforming to workplace environments (Jacobs, 2008).

From Prison to Work in Connecticut

Connecticut's Workforce Alliance (2015) research illustrated a successful community-based reentry program for returning citizen ex-offenders. The organization created Connecticut's One Stop Workforce Alliance, and One-Stop Career Center.

According to the Alliance, each month hundreds of offenders were released to return to South Central Connecticut. The program provided life skills training, job training, and job placement services. Unlike other programs, by the time an employer met a job candidate, the community and staff of each company had the opportunity to screen each prospective candidates as they prepared for employment. Through this process, the ex-offenders began to trust their potential employer. They started by working with probation and parole officers, police, the district attorney, and job training and placement agencies. A solid trust foundation was built as each ex-offender is placed on the appropriate career track to help them rebuild their lives. In this program, ex-offenders chose from the following types of jobs:

- construction,
- trades apprenticeship,
- manufacturing,
- warehouse and stock work, and
- lawn and tree maintenance.

Through employment, the agency's staff believed and research indicated that ex-offender returning citizens would become loyal, dependable, honest, and hard-working employees. However, in addition to ex-offender status, they found that returning citizens sometimes had to deal other barriers to employment as well. These barriers included homelessness, substance abuse, mental health issues, lack of training and education, and lack of employment history.

Connecticut's Workforce Alliance (2015) struggles to obtain the funding which is needed to expand training and job-related services that can be offered to ex-offenders.

Expanded services the Alliance proposes to offer include:

- dedicated case management, career counseling, and job skill development;
- occupational skills training;
- on-the-job training;
- customized workshops that focus on expunging prison records, job searching interviewing strategies;
- life skills strategies;
- support Services;
- transportation Assistance;
- child Care Assistance; and
- identification Document Assistance (Driver's License, Social Security Cards).

The Connecticut Workforce Alliance (2015) reported that it costs taxpayers \$30,000 per year to house offenders. For the cost of incarcerating eight prisoners, \$240,000, the Alliance could place and train hundreds of people in areas of potential employment. The underlying belief of the organization is that returning citizen ex-convicts who have sustainable jobs, an income, and good attitudes are less likely to return to jail or prison (Connecticut Workforce Alliance, 2015; Workforce Alliance, n.d.).

Barriers to Vocational Programs

Most state and federal correctional systems are overcrowded. Nebraska's system is included in this category. The Nebraska Department of Corrections website indicates

that currently the prison system is at 157% capacity (Nebraska Department of Corrections, 2015). With overcrowded conditions, prisoners often do not have an opportunity to be engaged in meaningful work inside the walls, work that could be a training opportunity for after-release vocational training and employment. The availability of work release could also be a determining factor in choosing what jobs prisoners will do upon release, or whether they will work at all.

A recent report asserted that one-quarter of the entire national prison population is idle, not participating in any kind of meaningful work or education programs during their incarceration (Connecticut Workforce Alliance, 2015). Prisoners who are employed usually work at menial labor for little or no prison pay. These jobs include kitchen work, barbering, working as a dorm or cellblock orderly, in maintenance, the laundry, or in prison industries. The bulk of prisoners are occupied doing field, cafeteria, maintenance, or factory labor. Some prisons have hog or dairy farms, canneries, furniture shops, computer repair shops, or factories that manufacture prison apparel.

The study also found that most state prisons reserve clerical jobs for trustee prisoners who have at least some college education and training. The minimum qualifications for these jobs generally include proficiency in keyboarding, use the computer, filing, writing correspondence, and record keeping. Convicts often work as clerks in prison administrative, medical, educational, vocational, or industrial offices. These inmate clerks may also manage laundry, commissary, or kitchen services. In some southern states, prisoners labor in large agricultural and road repair operations. Convict work crews have been used to pick fruit, cotton, or sugarcane on farms, or to clean

highway rest areas. Convict workers are still guarded by correctional officers on horseback or in pickup trucks who have permission to use deadly force. Some states still use chain gangs, in which prisoners are chained together, wear striped suits, and are forced to perform hard labor (Connecticut Workforce Alliance, 2015; Workforce Alliance, n.d.).

Preparing for Life Outside the Walls

Austin and Irwin (2012) proposed that prisoners participate in programs that are designed to assist or enhance their ability to succeed upon release. Programs that provide vocational training and skills are good choices, but substance abuse treatment and counseling programs are also recommended. All state prisons now provide at least limited educational programs to prisoners, including adult basic education up to the eighth-grade level, and general equivalency diploma (GED) programs. Austin and Irwin (2012) determined that since the abolition of the Federal Pell Grant Program for prisoners in 1994, very few prisons offered any kind of high school or college courses for any kind of credit. Vocational training offered has usually been closely related to work performed for the prisons, in occupations such as car repair, welding, carpentry, brick masonry, painting, electrical, or plumbing. However, very few convicts are assigned to training programs that go beyond entry-level proficiency in any of the trades.

Because approximately 97% of those currently incarcerated will one day be released, the problems within state correctional facilities throughout the U.S. will be passed onto the broader community. Vocational training programs and more education could pay very high dividends to these prisoners when they are released. This will be

discussed in greater detail in Chapter Five, with supportive literature from Abraham Maslow and Gary Becker. The following are examples of successful vocational inmate programs that have been implemented across the country.

Michigan Department of Corrections Prison Build Program

The Michigan Prison Build Program's website, Prison-build (Michigan Department of Corrections, 2015) illustrates ways that the Michigan Department of Corrections (MDOC) Prison Build Program has created success inside the walls. The Department of Corrections' major partners help provide low-cost housing for families in need through the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA). Working with Habitat for Humanity, local units of government, and nonprofit organizations, they provide housing and related products for low-income families through the use of inmate labor. The Prison Build Program has educated and provided hands-on training to inmates in the building trades and horticulture industries. The inmates construct walls, cabinets, trim, and other housing components. They build entire homes, design and create interior products, devise landscape plans, and provide the needed horticulture products. Inmates are linked to employers to find jobs, and to aftercare programs to assist them in their reintegration after release from prison.

The history of Michigan's Prison Build's Program began in March of 2000, when a three bedroom house, built by state prisoners, was loaded on a truck and driven through the streets of Saginaw, Michigan, to a site where a young Hispanic woman and her four-year-old son were to make their home. Eight Level I (minimum-security) prisoners from the Saginaw Correctional Facility worked under the direction of a department

employee who had extensive experience in house construction. On-site construction began in late December 1999 inside the security perimeter of the facility, and was completed on March 14, 2000. Doors were hung, trim and molding were added, and the kitchen and bath cabinets were installed. The only work not performed by inmates was the electrical, heating, and plumbing installation. The house was constructed on steel beams, which allowed it to be moved. It was attached to a truck and moved to its site by a professional house mover. The 1,050 square foot house, which had cost \$35,000 to build, was dedicated on March 27, 2000 (Michigan Department of Corrections, 2015).

The House on Wheeler Street became the first home in the world ever constructed within a prison by inmates for the Habitat for Humanity program. According to the Michigan Prison Build Program (2015), the Michigan Department of Corrections has helped prisoners build homes for hundreds of low-income families since its inception, while setting in motion a skill-building and career-track path for these potential returning citizens.

The Michigan Department of Corrections has been supported community projects for years. Michigan Governor Engler, in his 1998 “State of the State” address, proposed that the Department of Corrections work with Habitat for Humanity affiliates in order to speed up construction at home sites by having prisoners prefabricate the wall panels inside prisons. With this mandate, Department Director McGinnis instructed the Saginaw Correctional Facility in Freeland, the Ionia Temporary Correctional Facility (now called Deerfield Correctional Facility), and the Mid-Michigan Correctional Facility in St. Louis, to help design and construct the interior and exterior wall panels for 850,

1,200 square foot homes. In the first year 1998 -1999, 72 sets of these wall panels were constructed for Habitat families. The Prison Build Program was formed from this pilot project. Except for electrical, heating, and plumbing installation, trades which require licensed journeymen, all work was done by inmates (Michigan Department of Corrections, 2015).

The Prison Build Program was named a semi-finalist in the 2001 Harvard University Innovations in American Government program, and in the 2001 Council of State Government Innovations program. Former Director Martin was named to Habitat for Humanity's first National Advisory Board for Prison Partnership and, the Program was named one of the top five prison partnerships in the country by Habitat for Humanity International (Michigan Department of Corrections, 2015).

In 2003, Governor Granholm recognized the value of the program, which was part of a major initiative with the Detroit Habitat for Humanity affiliate. Inmates participating in the Prison Build Program constructed all of the wall panels in one home in one week. In addition, volunteers from each of the State Departments, including Corrections, assisted in actually building the Governor's house. Habitat for Humanity International later named Michigan as the site of the 2005 Jimmy Carter Work Project. Nearly 250 Habitat homes were built throughout Michigan from June 19 to June 24, 2005. Prisoners built wall panels, cabinets, sheds, and providing horticulture products for this effort (Michigan Department of Corrections, 2015).

Education and training. Using a systems approach to training prisoners to build houses and housing components, the Michigan Prison Build Program has partnered with

other state agencies, housing contractors and landscape architects to design a seamless reintegration for offenders. Inmates must complete one of two vocational training prerequisites--building trades or horticulture--to enter the building program. These courses are a part of the programs and services provided by the Department of Correction's Education Division (Michigan Department of Corrections, 2015).

The curricula are standardized and annually reviewed. Union and non-union contractors reviewed and approved the new building trades' curriculum. In addition, the Michigan Nursery and Landscape Association met with program staff and reviewed the horticulture and landscape curriculum. Inmates apply for jobs in the program. They not only need to be proficient in the skills required to build a house or design landscaping, but they must also be able to work effectively with others. Once an inmate completes course work and is accepted into the program, he or she is assigned to a building or horticulture site where the inmate can put learning to practical experience. Builders may build wall panels, mill trim, or construct cabinets. Those in horticulture provide the horticulture items and landscape design (Michigan Department of Corrections, 2015).

Growth through partnerships. The Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) has provided grant money to various organizations including Habitat for Humanity to pay for building new homes and for renovations to homes. The Michigan Army National Guard has picked up and transported wall panels to Habitat build sites throughout the state. Soldiers fulfill military obligations and Habitat for Humanity has saved thousands of dollars annually in transportation costs. These partnerships include:

- The Bureau of Constructions Codes, which approved the Program to build complete housing on a regular basis at the Saginaw Correctional Facility. The staff at the Bureau of Constructions Codes provided oversight and inspections.
- Michigan Department of Corrections (MDOC) wardens and staff have implemented a build and delivery system not previously in place, in which, building and trades instructors not only teach course content, but orchestrate the actual building of housing components.
- Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) provides availability of applying for loans, financing and additional help for future homeowners.
- Michigan Department of Career Development (MDCD) provides the infrastructure necessary to link inmate resumes to private sector employers for future employment opportunities.
- Michigan Bureau of Construction Codes (BCC) through its division of building codes, works with staff to build quality housing for Michigan low-income families.
- Department of Information Technology (DIT) works to make sure the program message is delivered to Michigan citizens.
- Habitat for Humanity of Michigan (HFHM) organization provides the link to 85 affiliates marketing the program, and assisting in the logistical operations pertaining to production and delivery.
- Habitat for Humanity International and its Prison Partnership Program work with the Prison Build Program to provide inmates an opportunity to learn new skills and to give back to their communities.
- Army National Guard. Michigan soldiers fulfill military obligations by picking up the completed housing products at the prisons and transporting them to construction sites throughout the state. These civilian soldiers to date have delivered nearly 200 sets of complete housing walls. They traveled thousands of miles to every region in the state. (Michigan Department of Corrections, 2015)

Kentucky Department of Corrections Apprenticeship Training Program

The Department of Corrections, in conjunction with the Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS), provides an extensive educational program that includes a literacy program, adult basic education, and GED preparatory classes, and testing in all 12 correctional institutions. In FY 2004/2005, a total of 751 GEDs, 988 vocational certificates, and 266 vocational diplomas were issued during the school year. In addition, there were more than 500 inmates enrolled in the college program. The

Department of Corrections also offered a variety of vocational training opportunities in 30 different technical training programs. In FY 2004/2005, approximately 40% of the inmate population was involved in some type of educational or vocational training program. Comparable academic and vocational programs were also offered at the three facilities with which the department contracted to house inmates. The registered apprenticeship program was a voluntary training program (Kentucky Department of Corrections, 2015).

Throughout history, people have transferred skills from one generation to another through some form of apprenticeship. Apprenticeship is a training system that produces highly skilled workers who are able to meet the demands of employers who are competing in a highly competitive environment. The U.S. economy continues to come under increasing competitive global pressure. Kentucky found it was economically competing with other states, as well as the entire manufacturing world. In order to create a highly trained and skilled workforce, Kentucky's goal was to develop a highly effective on-the-job apprenticeship training program (Kentucky Department of Corrections, 2015).

The unique feature of the Department of Corrections Apprenticeship Training Program apprenticeship concept was that on-the-job training is supplemented with technical classroom instruction. Apprentices work under the supervision of qualified journey/workers to develop their chosen trade or skill and learn the techniques, materials, and equipment associated with that trade. Classroom instruction that provides training in theoretical and technical aspects of the trade is required. Minimum class time is 144 hours for each year of apprenticeship, but may be higher for some trades. Apprentices

are generally evaluated every six months. They receive pay raises based upon their proven progress in skill development as well as in their classroom proficiency. When a registered apprenticeship program sponsor verifies that the apprentice has fulfilled all requirements of the training program, the Labor Cabinet will issue a certificate of completion. This nationally recognized certification is verification that the completing apprentice is a fully qualified skilled worker in the trade (Kentucky Department of Corrections, 2015).

Participating industries. Industries participating in the Kentucky Department of Corrections Apprenticeship Training Program include construction, manufacturing, telecommunications, information technology/networking, service and retail industries, health care, and public utilities. Employers, employer associations, and joint labor-management sponsors operate registered apprenticeship programs in the private and public sectors. Program sponsors pay most of the training costs while also progressively increasing wages to their apprentices as they gain skills. Registered apprenticeships can be competency-based or time-based depending on the sponsor's needs. Registered apprenticeship programs range from one to six or more years in length. Because the content of the training program is driven by industry needs, the end result is workers with skills that are in high demand (Kentucky Department of Corrections, 2015).

Government's role. The Kentucky Labor Cabinet, Division of Employment Standards, (DESAM), and Apprenticeship in cooperation with the Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training is oversees Kentucky's apprenticeship system. The DESAM is responsible for:

- Registering apprenticeship programs that meet federal and state standards,
- Protecting the safety and welfare of apprentices,
- Issuing nationally recognized and portable Certificates of Completion to apprentices,
- Promoting the development of new programs through marketing and technical assistance,
- Assuring that all programs provide high quality training, and
- Assuring that all programs produce skilled, competent workers. (Kentucky Department of Corrections, 2015)

Establishing a program. A registered apprenticeship is a voluntary industry-driven training program. The registered apprenticeship program may be a partnership of business and organized labor as the primary operators of programs, or implemented by employers or employer associations. Government plays a support role. The Kentucky Labor Cabinet and DESAM, provide technical consultation services relating to the development of the apprenticeship standards. Employers or groups of employers, including the relevant unions, design, organize, manage, and finance registered apprenticeship programs under a set of apprenticeship standards. These standards include an on-the-job training outline, related classroom instruction curriculum, and the apprenticeship operating procedures. These standards are then registered with the Kentucky Labor Cabinet (Kentucky Department of Corrections, 2015).

California Career Technical Education Programs

Next, we will examine the California prison systems' Career Technical Education (CTE) training programs (California Department of Developmental Services, 2015). CTE training is provided to incarcerated convicts in different career sectors. The career sectors are aligned to career paths which have positive employment outlooks within the

State of California. This training provides an employment pathway to a livable wage when the ex-convicts are returned to society.

CTE programs. Each of the CTE programs is aligned to industry-recognized certification (California Department of Developmental Services, 2015). The CTE programs include:

- construction Technology,
- carpentry,
- masonry,
- plumbing,
- industrial painting,
- electrical construction,
- heating/ventilation/air-conditioning/refrigeration,
- sheet metal,
- welding,
- electronic,
- office services,
- computer literacy,
- cosmetology,
- machine shop,
- auto mechanics/engine service and repair,
- automotive body repair and refinishing,
- small engine repair. (California Department of Developmental Services, 2015)

This prison-based program is part of the Office of Correctional Education.

Programs are available at all California institutions. Each institution has its own specific set of CTE programs based on size, mission, and available space appropriate for each particular program.

Career Technical Education training programs uses a stackable curriculum.

Allowing the curriculum for each inmate/student to enter a career pathway based on achievement in the program. This stackable approach to learning allows each

inmate/student to develop basic employment skills in as little as three-to-six months. The average program length is 18-24 months, enabling students to acquire more advanced skill levels and certifications. There are no specific eligibility requirements for enrollment. Any inmate may request participation in CTE programs. Robertson (2012) stated that like any business, California Prison Industry Authority (CPIA) has responded to a changing market.

Inmates at Folsom State Prison who build modular buildings have developed a new product in healthcare. According to Robertson (2012), the program serves a dual purpose by helping inmates learn a trade and by improving access to healthcare within California's prison system. During the construction boom, sales to state agencies of modular buildings built by the California Prison Authority totaled \$340 million annually. State cutbacks reduced sales over the last three years to less than \$2 million. However, Robertson (2012) asserted that the one-year recidivism rate for inmates who participated in the Career Technical Education Program is 7%, compared to more than 42% for the general prison population. The three-year recidivism rate is about 11%, compared to more than 65% for corrections as a whole.

Educational initiatives. As part of the Division of Rehabilitative Programs, the Office of Correctional Education (OCE) offers correctional facility inmates various academic and training programs at each of California's adult state prisons. The mandate of OCE was to provide offenders with needed education and career training as part of a broader CDCR effort to increase public safety and reduce recidivism. All adult schools

in the CDCR prisons are fully accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) (California Department of Corrections, 2015).

This accreditation is to ensure the highest level of education. CTE programs offer industry standard certification. The OCE offers various academic and education programs at each of California's adult state prisons. The Office of Correctional Education focuses on programs ranging from (a) Adult Basic Education (ABE); (b) CTE; (c) GED classes; (d) high school diploma programs; (e) television, library, and recreation services; and (f) Voluntary Education Programs (VEP)—College. The mission of the CPIA is to provide inmates with job skills so they don't return to prison. This system provides employment for about 7000 inmates (Robertson, 2012).

Nebraska's Prairie Gold Homes (PGH) Construction Training for Incarcerate Individuals

According to Bauer (2013), Prairie Gold Homes (PGH) is a 501 (c) 3 non-profit organization that provides construction training for incarcerated individuals with the goal of reducing recidivism rates. PGH offers all participants a certificate program in partnership with the Home Builders Institute, which is based in Washington D.C. The program also offers a pre-apprentice certificate and job skills training, under the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) rules and regulations. The incarcerated persons are selected and approved trustees from the work release center. They have the background skills that will allow them to become employed upon release from prison in a combined screening-selection process and protocol of PGH and the Nebraska Department of Correctional Services (NDCS). The screening process that

participants have obtained along with background skills will support their future employment outlook when they are released from prison (Bauer, 2013; NDCS, 2013).

Bauer (2013) observed that participation in PGH allowed graduates upon release from prison to have an opportunity to earn a livable wage in the construction industry throughout Nebraska. Program participants are taught construction skills first through classroom training followed then by hands-on training. Incarcerated persons for this program were required to meet high standards in order to be selected for participation. They gained work experience building modular homes that were shipped throughout rural Nebraska, where affordable housing is often in short supply. They also build affordable homes on-site in partnership with the City of Lincoln's Urban Development Department, Neighbor-Works, and other housing groups.

Testimonials. To convey the impact of PGH, Bauer (2013) included two testimonials that were written by recent PGH graduates. One prisoner, incarcerated for 13 months in the Nebraska State Penitentiary (NSP), was able to set and obtain his goal of receiving his GED. He also met the requirements of probation while learning carpentry and other construction skills required for construction of an on-site house in Lincoln, NE. While building a house on a foundation, he learned rough and finish-carpentry, as well as concrete pouring, roofing, electrical, plumbing, and drywall skills and procedures. This ex-convict citizen has returned to society. He states that he was glad he worked hard to get into a program that definitely gave him confidence and preparation to be successful upon release from prison. He is now motivated to continue his education and training, to seek a good paying job, and to stay out of trouble.

The second individual had been incarcerated for six years at the Lincoln Correctional Center (LCC), and for three years at the NSP. He knew how much he had to lose. Participation in PGH was his last opportunity to acquire real-world skills that could be translated into a meaningful job before his release from prison. Within the next year he accepted the invitation to participate in PGH, joining a crew of nine felons. Together they built a home from the ground up. Graduating from this program gave this returning citizen a new hope that society will no longer judge him as a convict, but rather as a man with skills and motivation, and a full member of society. He wrote that not only was he helping himself to not become a statistic of recidivism, but more importantly, he was helping a community that he had hurt by his actions. He once again had a feeling of being of value. Finally, he said that Prairie Gold Homes is one of the best programs that the Nebraska Department of Corrections has to offer. He can confidently say that now he has more than a chance, "I have the beginning of a very good life." He thanked Prairie Gold Homes for seeing him as the person he wanted to be. Bauer, R. (2013, June).

Program structure. PGH, located in Lincoln, Nebraska, has a staff of four. It is a non-profit organization that provides training for incarcerated individuals with a goal of reducing recidivism rates through a construction and building program for inmates inside the walls. According to the website, PGH states that the program benefits all Nebraska communities by helping inmates gain job skills and become productive citizens while building affordable, energy-efficient housing for our communities (Prairie Gold Homes, 2015). Bauer, R. (2013, June) observed that the pre-apprentice certificate and job skills training in the construction trades, combined with proficiency and training in OSHA rules

and regulations, and first aid training, provide incarcerated persons with the opportunity to earn a livable wage and to continue their training and work potential once released from prison. The organization operates their jobs training program in collaboration with the Nebraska Department of Correctional Services (Prairie Gold Homes, n.d.).

Individuals in the PGH program must apply for admittance and participate in an interview process to assure they qualify, are excellent candidates, and are the right fit for the program. Some of the PGH requirements include:

- program participants must have a high school diploma or have obtained the GED;
- program participants must pass with a score of 11 or higher in the math, reading, and language sections on the Test for Basic Adult Education;
- program participants should be within six months of work release eligibility when they are placed in a trustee status;
- program participants have no Mandatory Write Ups in the previous 12-months; and
- program participants must not have any prior or known gang affiliation. (Prairie Gold Homes, n.d.)

The current ethnicity of participants has averaged about 60% white and 40% black.

Geographically, program participants from all over Nebraska are selected for participation in the PGH program, and some have been relocated to Nebraska from other prison systems in other states (Prairie Gold Homes, n.d.).

- *Building standards.* Prairie Gold Homes was organized in 2009. PGH trains and teaches 35-40 inmate “trustees” from the Lincoln Correctional Prison Center each calendar year in four-month rotations. The men are transported in a prison van either to the actual building lot within the city limits of Lincoln, or they build modular homes on moving beams and trusses on prison property. The construction takes place inside the walls on a parcel of land next to Cornhusker State Industries.
- The homes conform to all local, state and national building codes and standards. Construction professionals supervise the construction. State electrical and plumbing inspectors and city inspectors visit the housing projects regularly and as needed. If the homes are modular construction, all

homes are certified prior to transport to the buyer location. If they are built onsite, City of Lincoln building inspectors do all inspections. (Prairie Gold Homes, n.d.)

All Prairie Gold Homes are standard-stick built. PGH averages four homes per year, two modular units and two stick-built on-site. When houses are built as modular units, they are built on a post and beam under-carriage that ensures stability while being constructed. Then the houses are professionally transported to a permanent foundation. These homes have been transported to various communities throughout Nebraska (Prairie Gold Homes, n.d.).

Transitioning to an outside-the-walls program. There is no transitional program currently in place for these men to transition to upon their release from prison. The three-year recidivism rate for the forty participants in the PGH construction training program for the last three years is zero (Bauer, 2015).

South Dakota's Governor's Housing Project

South Dakota's Governor's Housing Project is located at the Mike Durfee State Prison, Springfield, South Dakota (South Dakota Department of Corrections, 2015). It was initiated in the spring of 1996 by then-Governor Janklow. Janklow's original mission and vision was, that if inmates were given a marketable skill, they would have a greater opportunity to succeed once they were released. Janklow believed that teaching inmates the value of work made them productive members of society, thus reducing recidivism. The South Dakota program has been consistently productive and successful throughout the years, serving as a model of an inside-the-walls home building and

construction trades program. Again, inmates have an opportunity to develop real world construction skills (South Dakota Department of Corrections, 2015).

The program grew rapidly in popularity, originally starting at the West Farm in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. The initial houses were determined to be too small. As the program kept growing, the Governor recognized that a larger inmate population could be served and they needed more room. The South Dakota Housing Authority (SDHA) relocated the project headquarters to its present site, the Mike Durfee State Prison (South Dakota Department of Corrections, 2015).

Eventually, 72 pads were put into place for building modular houses. The inmate workforce has increased from the original 12-man crews that started on the West farm to more crews of more than 140 inmates now working and learning at the Mike Durfee State Prison (South Dakota Department of Corrections, 2015).

There are now five full-time construction supervisors overseeing the construction of 59 houses by inmate teams (Maruska, 2015). This program builds an average of 40-45 houses per calendar year inside the walls. The homes are standard stick-built construction on floor trusses that ensure durability when the units are transported to the purchaser. The homes conform to all local, state and national building codes and standards. The state electrical and plumbing inspectors visit the housing project regularly. All homes are certified prior to transport to the buyer location. Recidivism rates among building crew members have been reduced to approximately 5%. However, there are no current follow-up programs or extended transition construction trades

programs for reentry citizens as they are released from prison (South Dakota Department of Corrections, 2015).

The Importance of Education and Vocational Training in Prison

Drury (2013) estimated that taxpayers spent up to \$70 billion each year to house the nation's two-to-three million prisoners, or about \$31,000 per inmate. The prison system still does a particularly poor job of educating inmates for life after incarceration. Only about 6% of corrections spending has been used on education programs. Fewer than 15% of students in juvenile detention centers finish high school or complete a GED. Few prisons offer opportunities for adult inmates to pursue college degrees, making the important task of finding a job and reintegrating into society much more difficult.

According to this available literature, extra training and education in the vocational area appears to be paying dividends. For the few states that have turned to prison education and vocational programs to give these reentry citizens some purpose, some hope and some attachment when they are ready to be released back into society and the hopefully the recidivism rates will be at a much lower rate.

Chapter Three

Methodology

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to develop a fiscal model program theory proposal for training reentry citizen ex-convicts to remodel abandoned houses. This fiscal program theory model will explain why training and employing reentry citizen ex-convicts to remodel abandoned houses may be expected to have benefits to a community. The program proposal model of this study was grounded in a corresponding logic model that illustrates the program theory through proposed inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes (see Table 1) (Chen, 2005; University of Wisconsin, 2015; Wilder Research, 2009). Normative prescriptive program theory and causative descriptive program theory were based on causal, intervention, and action hypotheses. The program theory model utilizes and examines program theory *IF-THEN* evidence to establish connections between what is expected and what is to be accomplished (University of Wisconsin, 2015; Wilder Research, 2009).

As described in Chapter One, for this program evaluation the basic consideration for employment will be primarily to individuals participating in re-entry programs, after being released from the prison system for other-than-capital crimes. These individuals would be employed and trained by engaging in renovating and remodeling distressed and abandoned houses within the immediate Omaha city limits. To maximize the training benefit, the *IF-THEN* fiscal feasibility program evaluation was based on current building practices, procedures, equipment, and materials. This business model is intended to

become self-sufficient, and to produce a sustainable capital stream that will allow expansion in the specific field of general construction.

This program would train returning citizen ex-convicts to remodel, sell, and return inhabitable homes to replace properties that were once weed-infested, run-down, and abandoned. The program is also intended to help rebuild the lives of ex-offenders providing them with purpose, self-empowerment, and real-world jobs with a sustainable income (\$12.00 min/hour). The individuals will receive training in the construction trades, entrepreneurship skills, and life skills.

Program Action Logic Model

The main focus of the program action logic model was to determine the key *IF-THEN* questions based on the action logic model situations and priorities. Action Logic Models seek to answer the following questions: What is invested, what is done, who is served, and what are the results and impacts.

Inputs (*What is Invested*). The action logic model examined inputs including resources, funding, supplies, and staff. The trainer would conduct and provide classes, meetings and demonstrations, and supervise hands-on work for building and construction. Finally, the neglected and abandoned properties would be revalued and returned to the city tax rolls. Each of these inputs will be detailed and examined in Chapter Four to determine financial feasibility.

Outputs Activities (*What is Done*). The action logic model examines output activities including classes, meetings, demonstrations, hands-on work, building and construction, and establishing a successful work ethic. Returning citizen ex-convicts will

earn \$12.00 per hour while training and reconstructing abandoned homes. Each of these outputs activities will also be detailed and examined in Chapter Four.

Outputs Participation (*Who is Served*). The action logic model will examine outputs participation. Outputs include returning citizen ex-convict participants, as well as individuals and families who purchase and occupy the houses that are reconstructed by returning citizen ex-convicts. The city of Omaha is also served when houses are returned to the tax rolls. Each of these outputs of participation will be detailed and examined in Chapter Four.

Outcomes (*Results and Impact*). The action logic model will examine outcomes' midterm results, including changes in ex-convict skills through vocational employment, changes in ex-convict attitudes through vocational employment, and changes in ex-convict knowledge through vocational employment. Increased awareness of civic responsibility is also an expected result. The action logic model will examine long term impacts, which include returning citizen ex-convicts developing self-sufficiency. I hypothesize that self-sufficiency would lower recidivism rates when a person's employment potential is improved, and when they observe the impact that takes place when rehabilitated houses are purchased and occupied throughout the community. Each of these outcomes' midterm results will be detailed and examined in Chapter Four to determine financial feasibility.

Finally, each of the long-term impacts are analyzed and evaluated in Chapter Five to assess the theoretical and financial feasibility of this work opportunity for returning

citizen ex-convicts (see Table 2) (Chen, 2005; University of Wisconsin, 2015; Wilder Research, 2009).

IF-THEN Questions

Inputs (What is Invested).

Resources. *IF* returning citizen ex-convicts participate in and learn about construction and the rehabilitation of abandoned and uninhabitable homes, *THEN* they will be employable on construction projects.

Funding. *IF* a team of four returning citizen ex-convicts participates in and learns about construction and the rehabilitation of abandoned and uninhabitable homes, *THEN* they will each earn \$12.00 per hour paid for with an initial city grant of \$50,000.

Supplies. *IF* a team of four returning citizen ex-convicts participates in and learns about construction and the rehabilitation of abandoned and uninhabitable homes, *THEN* they will require the use of donated classroom space in the community and purchased learning supplies including laptop computers.

Staff who will conduct classes, meetings, and demonstrations. *IF* a team of four returning citizen ex-convicts participates in classes, meetings, and demonstrations in the rehabilitation of abandoned and uninhabitable homes from one construction trainer, *THEN* the construction trainer will earn \$20.00 per hour, paid for with an initial city grant of \$45,000.

Table 2

Evaluation of the Program Action Logic Model

	Focus	Collect Data	Analyze Data	Interpret Data	Use of Data
Steps to manage the evaluation	Describe the program action logic model and state the purpose of the study Determine key IF-THEN questions based on the action logic model situations and priorities including: 1. Inputs-- <i>What is Invested</i> ; 2. Outputs Activities-- <i>What is Done</i> ; 3. Outputs Participants-- <i>Who is Served</i> ; 4. Outcomes-- <i>Midterm Results</i> ; and 5. Impact-- <i>Long Term Impact</i>	Identify data points and sources	Process data costs for participants including:	What does the data tell us about program feasibility	Use of findings Next steps
Timeline for program implementation		Determine sample data points	1. Returning citizen ex-convicts during participation in classes, meetings, demonstrations, hands-on work, and building and construction, and	What was learned about participant variables	Lessons learned
Budget			2. Trainers who will conduct and provide classes, meetings, demonstrations, hands-on work, and building and construction		Implications for program continuance
Responsibilities				Process data costs for materials	

Source: Program Development and Evaluation Unit: University of Wisconsin (2015); Wilder Research (2009).

Staff who will supervise hands-on work and building construction. *IF* a team of four returning citizen ex-convicts participates in hands-on work and building construction in the rehabilitation of abandoned and uninhabitable homes from one construction trainer, *THEN* the construction trainer will earn \$20.00 per hour.

Identify abandoned uninhabitable off tax roll houses. *IF* the city of Omaha will identify and donate an abandoned and uninhabitable house, *THEN* returning citizen ex-convicts will rehabilitate the abandoned and uninhabitable houses returning them for sale and placing them back on the tax rolls.

Outputs Activities (What is Done).

Classes. *IF* a team of four returning citizen ex-convicts participates in and learns about money management, *THEN* they will learn how to manage their personal finances and earn \$12.00 per hour.

Meetings. *IF* a team of four returning citizen ex-convicts participates in and learns about power tool safety and construction site safety, *THEN* they will learn how to use power tools safely and earn \$12.00 per hour.

Demonstrations. *IF* a team of four returning citizen ex-convicts participates in and learns about the proper use of hand tools, small power tools, and large power tools, *THEN* they will learn how to use and have knowledge of the proper use of hand tools, small power tools, and large power tools and earn \$12.00 per hour.

Hands-on work. *IF* a team of four returning citizen ex-convicts use hand tools, small power tools, and large power tools on a construction site, *THEN* they will use these

tools in the construction and rehabilitation of an abandoned and uninhabitable house returning it for sale and placing it back on the tax rolls and earn \$12.00 per hour.

Building and construction. *IF* a team of four returning citizen ex-convicts work on a construction site they will learn demolition, house room layout, exterior framing, rough carpentry, insulation, window and door installation, siding installation, application of shingles, flashing, and vents, sheetrock installation, interior trim, finished carpentry, electrical, plumbing, heating and air conditioning rough-in, masonry, painting, concrete installation, on-going cost estimation, and storage, *THEN* they will use these skills in the construction and rehabilitation of an abandoned and uninhabitable house returning it for sale and placing it back on the tax rolls and earn \$12.00 per hour.

Establishing a successful work ethic reconstructing abandoned homes. *IF* a team of four returning citizen ex-convicts have a sustained and successful work experience on a construction site, *THEN* they will acquire a successful work ethic reconstructing abandoned homes and earn \$12.00 per hour.

Outputs Participation (Who is Served).

Returning citizen ex-convict participants. *IF* a team of four returning citizen ex-convicts participate in and learn about construction and rehabilitation of abandoned and uninhabitable homes, *THEN* they will become more proficient in learning the building trades and improve their skills and become more employable. *IF* the team of four returning citizen ex-convicts receive the introduction to the construction trades protocol, *THEN* they will receive classroom and hands-on knowledge and training in general building nomenclature, introduction to related hand and power tools and basic accepted

construction phases of operation. *IF* the team of four returning citizen ex-convicts receive the introduction to the real world work environment of residential and light commercial construction, *THEN* that type of training could foster and promote self-reliance, purpose, motivation, and accountability. *IF* the team of four returning citizen ex-convicts during their training is challenged to become part of the decision making process related to their construction training, *THEN* their self-reliance, purpose, motivation and accountability learned will assist in their development of their self-worth. *IF* the team of four returning citizen ex-convicts is engaged and actively participate in structured classroom and hands on training as the training relates to the building industry, *THEN* they will become more knowledgeable and proficient in their respective trades.

Individuals and families who purchase and occupy houses reconstructed by returning citizen ex-convicts. *IF* families and individuals purchase and occupy the houses reconstructed by returning citizen ex-convicts, *THEN* they will acquire the experience and have the opportunity for home ownership and experience the pride of owning a home. *IF* abandoned and uninhabitable residential properties are reconstructed by returning citizen ex-convicts acquired for this program, *THEN* upon the completion of the reconstruction by returning citizen ex-convicts, these homes could be sold at a reasonable price. The net profits could then be reinvested so the training organization could attain self-sustainability. *IF* homes are reconstructed by returning citizen ex-convicts are purchased and occupied, *THEN* through structured assistance to local residents, they could help reclaim their neighborhoods.

Results would include meaningful employment in the community and conversion of the uninhabitable abandoned houses and vacant lots into affordable and desirable housing in their immediate neighborhoods.

City of Omaha when houses are returned to the tax rolls. *IF* these houses are purchased and occupied by individuals and families, *THEN* the city of Omaha will be able to place their evaluation back on the tax rolls and once again receive income from the taxes paid. *IF* the city of Omaha will assist with the acquisition of qualified properties through the Inspection and Building Code Enforcement Departments, *THEN* it will provide financial collaboration and all will benefit. *IF* the city of Omaha assists with necessary funding through grants, program funding and philanthropic donations, *THEN* the program will have shared for all stakeholders, providing a win-win for all participants. *IF* an economic and viable resource is provided to the property owners of the reconstructed uninhabitable houses, *THEN* these individuals and groups that have purchased these homes will have a better opportunity to participate and receive the social and economic benefits of this endeavor.

Outcomes (Results and Impact).

(Results) Changes in ex-convict skills through vocational employment. *IF* the skills of ex-convicts can change and be improved through vocational employment, *THEN* the ex-convicts will become more employable, and will be able to obtain sustainable employment in the construction industry. *IF* returning citizen ex-convicts vocational skills are improved through vocational employment, *THEN* their acquired skills will be enhanced, better preparing them for sustainable employment. Provide them relevant

career training and education designed to give them the necessary proficiency and introductory to succeed as they re-integrate back into society.

(Results) Changes in ex-convict attitudes through vocational employment. *IF* behavior and attitudes can change and be improved through vocational employment, *THEN* the ex-convicts will acquire a positive attitude and motivation to become a better employees that could sustain employment in the construction industry. *IF* the attitudes of ex-convicts can change and be improved through vocational employment, *THEN* these ex-convicts will be able to better adapt to the real-world work environment, maintain quality marketable skills and maintain sustainable employment with more longevity and stable employment with positive attitudes and motivation.

(Results) Changes in ex-convict knowledge through vocational employment. *IF* the knowledge of the ex-convicts can change and improve through vocational employment, *THEN* the ex-convicts will be employable to obtain and maintain sustainable employment. *IF* the knowledge of the ex-convicts can change and improve through vocational employment, *THEN* they will become proficient and have better opportunities for sustainable employment with marketable skills from the knowledge they have acquired.

(Results) Increased awareness of civic responsibility. *IF* there is an increased awareness of civic responsibility among the ex-convict through vocational employment, *THEN* the ex-convicts, through their training experiences will become more confident and better citizens, as they return to society. *IF* there is an increased awareness of civic responsibility for the ex-convict through vocational employment, *THEN* the ex-convict

returning citizens could be more likely to give back and help others through a positive attitude and increased awareness of their civic responsibility.

(Impact) Returning citizen ex-convicts become self-sufficient. *IF* the returning citizen ex-convicts become self-sufficient, *THEN* they could take pride in their sustainable skill. They would appreciate the importance and longevity of home ownership. They would sustain a real-world job while advancing their careers. As they find purpose in their lives the likelihood of recidivism decreases. *IF* the returning citizen ex-convicts become self-sufficient, *THEN* they will become more accountable as their knowledge, education, training and skill levels increase. Participation should assist in developing self-actualization as they become role models for others to follow.

(Impact) Returning citizen ex-convicts have lower recidivism rates when their employment potential is improved. *IF* returning citizen ex-convicts find ways to become self-sufficient, and have longevity in a sustainable job, *THEN* they will be less likely to return to prison, potentially lowering recidivism rates. *IF* the returning citizen ex-convicts are adequately trained, their self-reliance, self-worth, and motivation are increased when they find purpose with sustainable income and real-world jobs, *THEN* these returning citizen ex-convicts are less likely to recidivate.

(Impact) Rehabilitated houses are purchased and occupied. *IF* rehabilitated houses are purchased and occupied, *THEN* the occupants of these homes will enjoy the pride and opportunity to own a home. *IF* rehabilitated houses are purchased and occupied, *THEN* neighborhood residents would be afforded an opportunity to reestablish pride in their neighborhoods. *IF* rehabilitated houses are purchased and occupied, *THEN*

affordable housing would be available to low and moderate-income families and individuals, which could help stabilize neighborhoods. Providing attractive housing could encourage further family influx requiring further new development. Chapter Four will evaluate *IF-THEN* statements for financial stability.

Chapter Four

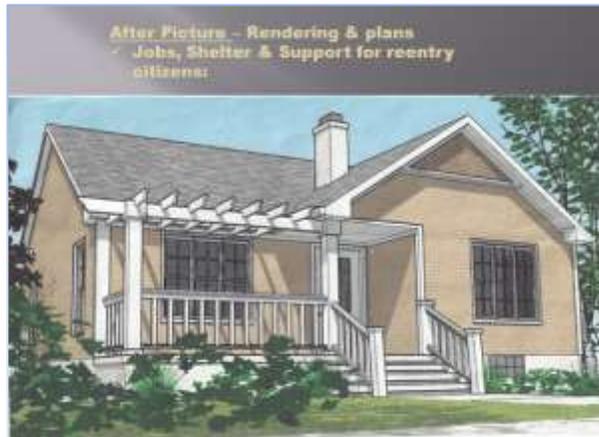
IF-THEN Statements with Tangible and Intangible Cost Analysis

The purpose of this chapter is to present the model that is used for the overview of my methodology as described in Chapter Three (Chen, 2005; University of Wisconsin, 2015; Wilder Research, 2009). This chapter includes a detailed examination of all listed *IF-THEN* Statements identified in Chapter Three, in addition to a series of charts, and listings with attached costs for each *IF-THEN* Statement. I examined cost the analysis and breakdowns for the program. The analysis includes tangible costs, intangible costs, impact of the program for cost savings for the city of Omaha and state of Nebraska, and specific cost breakdowns for the stated theory of the *IF-THEN* Statements. I will examine the tangible costs associated with this program in the *BEFORE* and *AFTER* pictures with the data shown in Figure 1.



Note: This is an example of an uninhabitable and abandoned North Omaha house in its current condition. As many as 750 such homes exist, ready to be demolished. Several have caught fire or been vandalized. Many have been occupied by vagrants or small animals. Copper and other items have been removed and sold (Burbach, 2014). The average annual tax gain for each rehabbed house could exceed \$2000. City of Omaha, (2014), Douglas County Treasurer, (2015).

Figure 1. Before picture.



Courtesy of Randy Meyer and Associates, Architects.
Omaha, Nebraska

Note: The rendering and plans have been created by Randy Meyer and Associates, Architects, Omaha, NE. The plan was designed by engineering students at North High School, Omaha, under the advice and guidance of instructor, Dr. Lee Kallstrom. This is a projection of what the same house will look like when completed by ex-felon trainees.

Figure 2. After picture rendering.

Tangible Costs: Obtaining Positive Cash Flow in Housing Rehab

Operation Phoenix (n.d.) research suggests that if the program started a new crew of 3 students and a trainer for 90-day cycles, it would take between 1 ½ to 2 years of 90-day blocks of work on each house to pay back the original investment. Once the program gets started, there could be more than one house under construction. The number of houses being rehabbed at any single time may vary, depending on the profit margin of each house, and on the amount of work that needs to be done on each house. Although each house will vary according to the house's size and state of repair, the average profit per house is expected to be approximately \$15,000. It will take a cycle of rehabbing approximately six houses to match the \$90,000 initial investment, and to begin a positive cash flow (see Appendix A for a complete breakdown of estimated costs.)

Intangible costs. A cost to the state when the inmate is incarcerated and a savings to the state when the inmate does not recidivate.

Nebraska housed an inmate population of approximately 5,102 inmates in maximum, medium and community custody in Nebraska in 2015. *IF* these inmates become successful in the proposed construction training program and do not recidivate, *THEN* there would be a yearly savings to the state of Nebraska of incarceration in which would range from \$18,833 to \$41,459 per prisoner. The mean savings to Nebraska as shown in Table 3 is \$32,153 per year/inmate for all 5 institutions.

The average cost savings for Nebraska for the main 4 institutions less the Community Corrections Center and work-release program in Lincoln of \$18,833 per year per inmate increases to a yearly inmate cost of incarceration of \$35,483. Based on this calculation, there would be approximately 2,000 inmates in medium, minimum, community and probationary custody that may qualify and become successful for this type of program, reducing recidivism. The Community Corrections Center and work-release programs were excluded because of the economics of the Nebraska Department of Corrections. Yearly costs of incarceration for the Lincoln Work Release Center and Lincoln Community Corrections Center in Lincoln are several thousand dollars lower per year per inmate, an average of \$18,833 as indicated in Table 3 (Nebraska Department of Corrections, 2015).

Table 3

Present Costs of Maintaining Inmates in the Nebraska Correctional Institutions

Nebraska Correctional Institution	2015 Yearly Cost of Incarceration
Nebraska State Penitentiary (NSP) Minimum, Medium, and Minimum Custody	\$33,886 per year/inmate
Lincoln Correctional Center (LCC) Maximum and Medium Custody	\$41,459 per year/inmate
Community Corrections Center – Lincoln (CCC-L) Work-release and Community Custody (Trustees)	\$18,833 per year/inmate
Omaha Correctional Center (OCC) Maximum and Medium Custody	\$25,922 per year/inmate
Work Ethic Camp, McCook (WEC) Intensive Supervision, Probationers, and Minimum Custody	\$40,666 per year/inmate
Average Incarceration Costs All Five Institutions	\$32,153 per year/inmate
Average Incarceration Costs of Four Institutions	\$35,483 per year/inmate
Less the cost of CCC-L \$18, 833 per year/inmate	

Note: This chart illustrates 2015 costs of incarceration in Nebraska by institution (Nebraska Department of Corrections, 2015).

The reason for the lower cost of incarceration is that these inmates are released for jobs. Some leave the institution for outside work every day. Most jobs are with facilities on prison grounds, such as laundry, maintenance, building, grounds, and Cornhusker State Industries (CSI), and some inmates take classes with the Prairie Gold Homes (PGH) program. They get paid \$1.80 per hour and work between 30 and 40 hours per week. Overhead money that is charged for their services is returned to the State Prison Program system. Because of this outlier population that essentially supports part of their own

incarceration costs, excluding them from the cost impacts of my program would reflect a more accurate average cost of incarceration.

Also omitted from the population for the purposes of this study and calculations are the inmates at the State Maximum Security Prison facility in Tecumseh, NE, and inmates at the Women's Prison in facility in York, Nebraska. The Maximum Security Prison in Tecumseh includes maximum-secured prisoners, life-sentence prisoners, and the ten death-row inmates. These individuals would not be eligible because of their status as dangerous offenders. Also at this time, my program is not designed to accept women that would be released from the York Prison facility for construction opportunities.

Reduced Recidivism

According to the Nebraska Department of Corrections (2015), the recidivism rate for 2012 in Nebraska was 31.4% for males. Recidivism rates are calculated for 3 years earlier than the present date (see Table 4).

Table 4

Nebraska Recidivism

Nebraska 2012 Recidivism Rates	
2012 Male Paroles	(295 inmates) 35.2%
2012 Male Mandatory Release	(204 inmates) 24.7%
Total 2012 Recidivism Rates	(499 inmates) *31.4%

*Note that recidivism rates are based upon prisoners who were first released three years ago (Nebraska Department of Corrections, 2015).

Life after Release from Prison

Wages. According to Nebraska labor statutes, all that is required of employers is that they offer the legal minimum wage. In 2014, the Nebraska Minimum Wage Increase 425 Minimum Wage Law was passed by the Nebraska Legislature. The law provided for an increase in the state minimum wage from \$7.25 to \$8.00 as of January 1, 2015. The wage will again increase to \$9.00 per hour on January 1, 2016. According to the Nebraska State Wage Statistics (Nebraska Department of Labor, 2015). The Nebraska Industry Standard for carpenters in Omaha, Douglas, and Sarpy Counties, area carpenter wages are at much higher than minimum wage rate.

Table 5 shows the estimated Employment Wage Statistics for individuals in Nebraska employed as carpenters in the second quarter of 2015.

Table 5

Nebraska Carpenter Salaries, June 2015

Carpenter Salaries	Entry Level	Median Experience	Experienced	
Hourly Salary	\$12.05/hr	\$16.36/hr	\$19.39/hr	Plus benefits
Yearly Salary	\$25,057/yr	\$34,023/yr	\$40,324/yr	Plus benefits
Union Carpenter	\$26.71/hr 0-6 months apprentice	\$31,76/hr 24-30 months apprentice	\$36.81/hr 48 month plus Journeyman status	Includes benefits— Journeyman Carpenter will average \$75,000/yr depending on overtime, weather, etc.

Source: Carpenters Union Local 427 (2015); Nebraska Department of Labor (2015).

Representatives of Carpenters Union Local 427 of Omaha (2015) reported that they had successfully used released inmates. The union representatives were open to using more released inmates in the future, and they supported the theory and training concepts of my program.

For training purposes, the returning citizens will be paid a sustainable wage of \$12.00 per hour to begin their training. This rate is significantly above the legal minimum wage in Nebraska for the near future.

Total Projected Costs

The following items have been identified as relevant program costs. Calculations have been made for each of the items in Table 7 through 11.

- Construction rehabilitation costs are defined as the costs associated with rehabbing the property.
- Projected hard costs include basic construction costs, training, overhead and profit, and a specific contingency individually allowed for each project.
- Projected soft costs include architectural and engineering costs, supervision, insurance, marketing and sales, legal costs and accounting, in addition to an allowable contingency,
- Estimated development costs include projected selling price, less development cost, and projected profit per unit costs.

Also within these tables is shown the positive impacts to the city of Omaha. The positive impacts include reduction in expenses to the city of Omaha, savings in

demolition costs, city lot maintenance of weeds, and an increase in taxable revenue to the city of Omaha.

Appendix A or construction costs shows a detailed breakdown in standard architectural/construction categories which are typically used by professional contractors, architects and engineers. There are normally 16 to 32 specific categories to consider. For simplicity, I began with the category of General Conditions in the order of construction. Also considered will be costs for materials, labor and wages, training and employees. The average house would be set up on a 90-day cycle. Costs will vary depending on the condition of the home requiring rehabilitation or remodeling, and on turn-around time.

Table 6 will be a graphic visual representation and layout of *IF-THEN* statements of the program action logic model. All the prime categories stated in the *IF-THEN* questions are based on the action logic model situations and priorities. Action Logic Models seek to answer the following questions: What is invested, what is done, who is served, and what are the results and impacts. This table will include each of the categories with the costs for each of the *IF-THEN* Statements per category referenced per activity of inputs or skills expected, skills learned and expected outcomes.

Cost Comparisons to Existing House

Campbell (2014) compared the cost comparisons of existing new construction units vs. renovation/rehabilitation square footage costs and suggested that existing program unit costs would exceed \$125.00 per square foot. Calculations for a 1,000 square-foot unit, as pictured on the second and third pages of Chapter Four, and as

Table 6

“If-Then” Statements

Activities/Inputs	IF	THEN	Outcomes
Introduction			
1. Learn a vocational trade	<i>IF</i> a student is in need of sustainable income, real world job and learning a vocational trade.	<i>THEN</i> a student will start at \$12.00 per hour, learn skills of the construction trade and become proficient and knowledgeable in the safety, tool use and trade proficiency.	Students will be employed and receive training by being engaged in the renovation and reclamation of distressed and abandoned properties and hand-on learning
2. Training to renovate, remodel and repair houses.	<i>IF</i> a student is in need of learning more about construction or having the ability to repair, remodel, renovate other existing abandoned or vacated home.	<i>THEN</i> a student will become more proficient in the carpentry and building trades, they will also learn codes, safety, tool use, and application. They will become better in critical thinking and deductive reasoning skills.	
			COST- 3 HRS \$36/STUDENT (Classroom) Demonstration of skills COST- 6 HRS \$72/STUDENT (Classroom)
3. OSHA Safety			
4. OSHA Testing (Occupation Safety and Health Administration)			

Table 6 continues

Activities/Inputs	IF	THEN	Outcomes
Discussion of building related activities, tasks, professions and occupations	<i>IF</i> a student understands the importance of safe practices in the classroom, in the workplace and the industry	<p><i>THEN</i> the students will</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Will be aware of safe practices and use them 2. Will comply with basic OSHA standards and practices 3. Will wear personal protective equipment 4. Will learn to report all injuries and react to unsafe workplace conditions and emergencies 5. Will use tools and equipment safely. 6. Will acquire basic first aid skills and meet OSHA standards 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participants will be asked to demonstrate skills through testing of OSHA Regulations. 2. Demonstrate skills through testing of OSHA requirements 3. Evaluation tests 4. Tool Safety tests 5. Tool Box talks 6. Show developing awareness of and demonstrate positive safety outlines 7. Repeat ongoing reminders and tests through daily demonstrations <p>Prevent accidents by</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Paying attention 2. No daydreaming 3. Prevent boredom and distraction <p>COST- 12 HRS STUDENT (Classroom) \$144</p>

Table 6 continues

Activities/Inputs	IF	THEN	Outcomes
Job Readiness Skills			
5. Money Management	<i>IF</i> the Student learns money management, open and managing checking and savings accounts, Balancing and checkbook and interview with banking officer	<i>THEN</i> the Student will become proficient in simple money management including management of their checking and savings accounts, balancing and bill paying.	The student will learn through interaction, videos, OJT, and at a banking institution. There will be a designated banker as a mentor and advisor will help them understand their banking needs and responsibilities.
6. Social Graces	<i>IF</i> the Student learns proper social graces, including how to greet people, good firm handshake, good eye contact, appropriate dress, grooming, hygiene and dress for success	<i>THEN</i> the student will become more confident and will acquaint a positive attitude and become more impressive to others	The student will learn through interaction, role playing, demonstration and practice of these skill until proficiency is achieved.
7. Relationship Building	<i>IF</i> the student learns relationship building, how to conduct to conduct themselves, respect authority, and learn to approach their boss and co-workers appropriately	<i>THEN</i> the student will become better acquainted with and more comfortable with the barriers confronting them toward job readiness skills.	The student will work with several criminal justice agencies to accelerate their skills in this area
8. Shopping, Buying, Purchasing	<i>IF</i> the student learns shopping, buying, purchasing and budgeting skills	<i>THEN</i> the student will become more proficient in these areas and become better prepared to adapt to a normal lifestyle.	The student will learn through interactive training demonstrations and pre and score the post test at 100%
			COST- 3 HRS Each Item Per Student (Classroom)

Table 6 continues

Activities/Inputs	IF	THEN	Outcomes
Math Skills			
Construction math and measuring devices			
9. Measuring devices; i.e.tape measures in standard and metric measurement.	<i>IF</i> a student learns the principles of measuring devices, calculating lengths, volumes, quantity, square and cubic measurement	<i>THEN</i> a student is ready to use math skills by mastering measurement devices in the world of construction work and trade specific work	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students will be asked to demonstrate skills and knowledge through interactive testing 2. Applied testing of measurement devices
10.Measuring devices; i.e.tape measures in standard and metric measurement.	<i>IF</i> a student learns to measure lumber, sheet goods and electrical, plumbing, HVAC including linear feet and fixtures estimates	<i>THEN</i> every worker from amateur carpenter determining exact length of material and amounts to a supervisor calculating payroll and estimating needs to gain a mastery of the principles of construction math	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Skills testing of pre-test and post-test of math concepts and materials. Pass post-test with 100%. 4. Pass measuring and calculating tasks and exams to expected standards.
11.Measuring devices; i.e.tape measures in standard and metric measurement.	<i>IF</i> a student learns basic math skills including addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, fractions, decimals, conversions, volume, square feet, cubic feet and simple equations,	<i>THEN</i> there needs to be a base of information acquired related math for all people that are involved in some phase of the building process	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Students will practice skills on a daily basis. 6. Students should calculate, measure work related material 7. Estimate materials needed 8. Students will become proficient in calculating volumes, distances and using applicable formulas <p>COST- 12 HRS STUDENT (Classroom) \$144</p>

Table 6 continues

Activities/Inputs	IF	THEN	Outcomes
Tools and Construction			
12.Hand Tools	<i>IF</i> Students can properly identify and use hammers, squares, saws, screwdrivers, and other small hand tools.	<i>THEN</i> Students will become more proficient in the proper and safe use of hand tools.	IN ALL INSTANCES 1. Students will be asked to identify proficiency in a pre and post test
13.Small Power Tools	<i>IF</i> Student can properly identify and use properly and safely small power tools such as drills, routers, sanders, reciprocating saws, small power saws	<i>THEN</i> the Students will become more proficient in the proper and safe use of small power tools	2. Students will demonstrate proper usage of tools and demonstrate and verbally share safety rules and features of each tool
14.Large Power Tools	<i>IF</i> Student can properly identify and use properly and safely large power tools such as table saws, bank saws, miter boxes and radial arm saws and shapers, and the like.	<i>THEN</i> the student will become more proficient in the proper and safe use of large power tools.	3. Students will demonstrate proper maintenance, storage and care of tools 4. Students will pass a proficiency all tool post-tests and safety tests with a 100% before using or operating.
15.Specific Tools of Other Trades	<i>IF</i> student can properly identify trade specific tools from the various trades	<i>THEN</i> those students will acquire an introductory knowledge of their usage and respect using trade specific tools.	

Table 6 continues

Activities/Inputs	IF	THEN	Outcomes
Carpentry			
16. Entry Level Carpentry Helper	<i>IF</i> a student learns the basic skills and knowledge about rough framing or carpentry terminology	<i>THEN</i> the Student should be able to frame floor, walls, ceilings and roofs.	IN ALL INSTANCES
17. Shingles, Flashing, Vents and Caulking,	<i>IF</i> a student learns the basic skills and knowledge about shingles, roof application, installing vents and caulking	<i>THEN</i> the student will be able to successfully apply roofing materials, flashing, vents and caulking.	Through the use of handouts, videos, illustrative handouts and on the job demonstrations, student's skills will be evaluated. Student must achieve 100% on their post-test
18. Installation Exterior Doors and Windows	<i>IF</i> a student learns to install exterior doors and windows	<i>THEN</i> the student will have become proficient in exterior door and window applications	
19. Siding Installation	<i>IF</i> a student learns to apply both vertical and horizontal siding,	<i>THEN</i> the student will become successful in hardboard and vinyl siding applications	
20. Insulation Application	<i>IF</i> a student learns to install floor, wall and ceiling insulation	<i>THEN</i> the student will become proficient in insulation installation.	
			COST- This training will be on-the-job part of the \$5760, Appendix A

Table 6 continues

Activities/Inputs	IF	THEN	Outcomes
Carpentry (cont'd)			
21. Wallboard (Sheetrock)	<i>IF</i> the student learns to install wallboard, tapes and finish sheetrock.	<i>THEN</i> the student will become more aware of this trade and applications of the Product	<p>IN ALL INSTANCES</p> <p>Through the use of handouts, videos, illustrative handouts and on-the-job demonstrations, the student's skills will be evaluated. The student must achieve 100% on their post-test</p> <p>COST- This training will be on-the-job part of the \$5760, Appendix A</p>
22. Interior Trim Finish Carpentry	<i>IF</i> the student learns to install interior doors, trim, and factory cabinets.	<i>THEN</i> the student will acquire a better understanding and skill set for finish carpentry	
23. Build Concrete Forms	<i>IF</i> the student learns to build concrete forms.	<i>THEN</i> the student will become more proficient in form construction for steps, driveways and patios	
24. Estimate and Calculate Materials	<i>IF</i> the student learns to determine and calculate materials for the job.	<i>THEN</i> the student will have a better understanding of materials needed for job.	
25. Store Materials	<i>IF</i> the student learns to store materials properly and safely.	<i>THEN</i> the student will gain the knowledge to make the job site cleaner, safer, and materials will be protected and stored properly	

Table 6 continues

Activities/Inputs	IF	THEN	Outcomes
Electrical			
26. Electrical Introductory	<i>IF</i> the student will learn the principles of electrical theory and circuitry and safety	<i>THEN</i> the student will be better acquainted with electrical procedures, practices and electrical safety procedures and OSHA standards	IN ALL INSTANCES Through the use of handouts, videos, illustrative handouts and on the job demonstrations, student's skills will be evaluated. Student must achieve 100% on their post-test
27. Electrical Rough-In	<i>IF</i> the student will learn to rough in a wiring circuit and pull wire to a panel box	<i>THEN</i> the student will become proficient in electrical rough-in	
28. Electrical Wiring	<i>IF</i> the student will learn how to wire switches, outlets and fixtures.	<i>THEN</i> the student will acquire an in-depth understanding of the wiring principles of the types of the switches, outlets and fixtures.	
29. Electrical Circuitry	<i>IF</i> the student will learn how to test circuits,	<i>THEN</i> the student will verify that circuits are testing correctly as they will often work in teams, learn to work safely and have proper knowledge of tools and their use.	
			COST: This Training will be on-the-job part of the \$5760 Appendix A

Table 6 continues

Activities/Inputs	IF	THEN	Outcomes
Plumbing			
30.Plumbing Piping and introduction	<i>IF</i> the student learns to both sweat copper piping and glue PVC piping and the techniques and terminology	<i>THEN</i> the student will develop skills in basic plumbing under supervision and with practice	1. Join copper and PVC according to industry standards and codes under supervision of master licensed plumber
31.Plumbing Rough-in and Plumbing Systems	<i>IF</i> the student learns plumbing rough-in, plumbing systems and blueprint reading	<i>THEN</i> the student will acquire a readiness in skills of plumbing rough-in and blueprint reading under supervision	2. Work under the supervision of licensed master plumber following safe working conditions, and OSHA regulations.
32.Pressure Testing	<i>IF</i> the student learns to pressure test systems	<i>THEN</i> the student will acquire the ability to pressure test systems	3. All student work will be evaluated local, state and national plumbing building codes
33.Plumbing Fixtures	<i>IF</i> the student learns to install plumbing fixtures and faucets	<i>THEN</i> the student will acquire knowledge of proper fixture and faucet installation	Using the same procedure under #2, student will demonstrate at 100% how to do all pressure testing
34.Plumbing Trouble-shooting	<i>IF</i> the student learns to resolve basic plumbing problems,	<i>THEN</i> the student will become better versed and aware of trouble shooting problems and techniques in the field.	All of the students work will be verified and evaluated at 100% by licensed master plumber.
			COST: This Training will be on-the-job part of the \$5760, Appendix A

Table 6 continues

Activities/Inputs	IF	THEN	Outcomes
Masonry and Brick			
35. Masonry materials	<i>IF</i> the student learns types of bricks, masonry materials and work safety.	<i>THEN</i> the student will become better acquainted with the masonry trade and follow OSHA regulations	In All Instances The student will have demonstrations, videos, on-the-job training, pre and post-tests, will achieve 100% on these tests and work under the supervision of a Master Mason to prove
36. Mortar preparation and distribution of materials	<i>IF</i> the student learns to mix and prepare mortar properly and distribute materials for brick layers.	<i>THEN</i> the student will have an awareness of introductory skills of the masonry craft and trade	
37. Masonry skills	<i>IF</i> the student learns introductory skills of brick, block, stone lay-out an brick and block laying.	<i>THEN</i> the student will acquire the proficiency beginning skills that will need years of practice and training to become proficient.	
38. Scaffolding and safety	<i>IF</i> the student learns proper use of scaffolding.	<i>THEN</i> the student will work safer.	
39. Masonry tools	<i>IF</i> the student learns proper use of masonry tools.	<i>THEN</i> the student will be come prepared for this trade and become better equipped to be a foreman of a crew.	
40. Estimating and calculating materials	<i>IF</i> the student learns to calculate and measure brick, block, stone and mortar usage,	<i>THEN</i> the student will be more proficient in estimating materials for the project.	

Table 6 continues

Activities/Inputs	IF	THEN	Outcomes
Painting and Finishing			
41. Painting common uses and introduction	<i>IF</i> the student learns to use common painting and finishing tools and materials	<i>THEN</i> the student will acquire an awareness and become better prepared in the painting trade.	The student will learn by demonstrations, videos and on-the-job training, the student will demonstrate knowledge through a 100% score on both the pre-test and the post-test The student will demonstrate and be evaluated on their application of safe working conditions, proper storage of materials and their attention to safety on scaffolding and ladders
42. Surface preparations and types of paints	<i>IF</i> the student learns to prepare various surfaces for painting and work safety	<i>THEN</i> the student will increase proficiency and follow OSHA practices.	
43. Protection of area	<i>IF</i> the student learns to protect surrounding surfaces for painting	<i>THEN</i> the student will become more proficient in the painting trade in area protection.	
44. Applications	<i>IF</i> the student learns to apply by brush, roller and spray techniques	<i>THEN</i> the student will start to master the skill sets required for the trade.	
45. Repairs	<i>IF</i> the student learns to identify and repair common drywall problems,	<i>THEN</i> the student will acquire a better understand and be better prepared to become successful in this trade.	
46. Textures and applications	<i>IF</i> the student learns to apply texture to walls and ceilings,	<i>THEN</i> the student will become more proficient in this part their trade.	

COST: This Training will be on-the-job part of the \$5760, Appendix A

Table 6 continues

Activities/Inputs	IF	THEN	Outcomes
Housing			
47. Affordable housing options	<i>IF</i> a student is in need of affordable housing	<i>THEN</i> could place these renovated homes back on the City tax rolls at an affordable price and provide housing for the reentry citizen if they qualify for independent living	The houses could provide a visible and positive impact on the neighborhood. Training these property citizens with purpose and self-improvement and motivation COST - \$5,760/STUDENT On-site – 12 WEEKS (Appendix A)

referenced in Appendix A, indicate that the cost to construct a new unit would exceed \$125,000. This figure exceeds many of the current residents of the market area from purchasing any of these units. Due to the instability of the market area, the attraction for new families to this area is, in all likelihood, limited.

Our proposed estimated renovation costs will be more than one-third lower than the cost of new construction. When we take into consideration all materials and equipment currently available to promote energy efficiency, the average cost will be approximately \$80.00 per square foot, compared to \$125.00 per square foot for new construction. If we compare substantially similar 1,000 square-foot units, renovation represents a total per-unit savings of more than \$45,000.00. Operating costs of renovated units will be significantly lower than those of the existing units in the market area because, during the renovating phase, consideration for energy efficiency will be retrofitted into these units.

The program's marketing plan is based upon providing affordable and decent housing by utilizing existing resources within the market area. The affordability of these units is intended to encourage home ownership, not only for individuals and families from the immediate area, but to appeal to individuals and families from the surrounding areas as well.

Financing for Target Area Homes

The focus customers for these housing units are intended to be low- to moderate-income individuals and families. Units will also be constructed that conform to federal requirements for individuals with physical handicaps.

Source of funds necessary to purchase housing units. Housing units will be purchased by individuals in the community, or who move into the community. The increase in quality housing is expected to be provided through immediate and gainful employment to individuals within the market area. When this business plan is fully operational, the annual payroll is projected to exceed an estimated \$355,000.00 (Campbell, 2014).

- Significant funds are available to assist individuals and families presently residing within the market area, to be used for the purchase of property. These funds exceed \$41 million in annual assets (City of Omaha Planning Department- Community Development Division, 2014). The target market for purchasing renovated properties has funds available for that endeavor (Campbell, 2014).
- Because neighborhoods brought about by this program/business will be stabilized, and even improved, peripheral businesses will also be motivated to locate in this redeveloped area, which in turn will add additional income and employment opportunities.
- In summary, the program will eventually sustain itself.

Alternate methods of home ownership. There are many unique social and business opportunities in the North Omaha market area. These opportunities support the concept of converting distressed property into affordable and desirable housing. Without a profit motive, this proposal would be social in nature only. Because this business

proposal must be self-sustaining, a profit must be made on each sale of these renovated properties.

Campbell (2014) stated that we must analyze not only the traditional path of home ownership, but we also must examine avenues by which home ownership can be accomplished, considering the current financial environment. There are many possible avenues to home ownership, including:

- conventional loan procedures,
- existing government sponsored loans and grants,
- charitable organization participation,
- religious organization participation,
- sweat equity concepts,
- bank and lending institution participation, and
- participation by the City of Omaha.

Financial Plan

Campbell (2014) stated that Operation Phoenix will provide financial benefits to many individuals and organizations, including the city of Omaha. The Omaha community experiences a significant loss of revenue due to abandoned property. Currently, there are 775 units on the demolition list. According to the Omaha World Herald (July, 2014), there were 3,500 vacant lots.

Vacant lots. Vacant lots affect the city of Omaha by increasing expenses and lowering potential revenue. Table 7 shows the projected loss to the city for 3,500 vacant lots and describes the present day costs and liabilities to the city of Omaha. The city must

Table 7

Incurred (Loss) for the Existing 3,500 Vacant Lots in Inventory

	Cost
Demolition costs @ \$10,000.00	\$35,000,000.00
Weed assessment annual	\$525,000.00
Administrative cost, inspectors prior to demolition	\$12,040,000.00
Loss property tax revenue, assume \$500.00	\$8,750,000.00
Estimated incurred (loss) to date on vacant lots	(\$56,315,000.00)

Source: Douglas County Treasurer (2015); City of Omaha Planning Department-Community Development Division (2014).

presently demolish or maintain the abandoned properties. At the same time, the properties add no additional revenue to the city. (City of Omaha Planning Department- Community Development Division, 2014). It is important to have a grasp of possible demolition costs that currently will be incurred by the city of Omaha, because not all houses are salvageable. They will need to be demolished and rebuilt.

Properties on the current demolition list. Properties that are abandoned eventually become uninhabitable. Owners avoid their civic responsibilities and allow the units to disintegrate into dangerous and unsightly properties that are stripped of any valuable items. The properties may be inhabited by homeless individuals, but they are more likely infested with vermin or are vandalized.

- Current demolition list indicates 775 units.
- Estimated demolition cost per unit is \$10,000.00.

- Of properties reviewed, average property taxes in areas over a 4 year period are in arrears, with little likelihood of ever being repaid. Without checking each listing for the 775 units, we do not know precisely per how far back or how many tax dollars are owed per house. According to a recent Burbach, (2015) stated that beginning in November 2015, the City of Omaha will pursue delinquent landlords, and force them to pay their debts to the community.
- Property assessments are \$500.00 per year per unit.

Table 8 shows the projected losses to the city costs of demolition, taxes, city prime and sub administrative costs, miscellaneous assessments calculated from the 750 abandoned properties in North Omaha.

Table 8

Projected (Loss) Liability for Properties on the Current Demolition List

	Cost
Demolition	\$7,750,000.00
Taxes in areas	\$1,550,000.00
City Prime Administrative	\$1,488,000.00
City Sub Administrative	\$1,178,000.00
Miscellaneous assessments (weeds, etc.)	\$116,250.00
Projected (loss) on current demolition list properties	(\$12,082,250.00)

Source: City of Omaha Planning Department-Community Development Division (2014).

The following factors are not included or calculated in (loss) liability:

- Any additional units added to demolition list.
- Properties not on the actual demolition list, but are vacant and/or abandoned.
- Continuation of holding and addition of “inventory.”
- Loss revenue due to depressed property assessed values.

Operational cost to develop single unit. In order to provide a breakdown of operational costs, Table 9 shows construction costs as both hard and soft costs for one unit. The supporting documents for the basic construction (hard costs) are in Appendix A.

Operational plan for one year. The plan for Operation Phoenix is to utilize 3 work crews to complete 12 units in a calendar year. Each work crew will be able to renovate a property in 90 days. Each crew will be able to complete 4 renovations in 12 months. The 3 work crews of a foreman/trainer and 3 employees/trainees will create a total of 12 new jobs in North Omaha during this period.

Based on the costs, selling price, and projected profit as listed above, the one-year plan will have produced 12 renovated properties. The projected profit will be \$180,000. At this point, the \$80,000 will be reinvested to purchase and renovate new properties, with a projected profit of \$15,000 per house.

Positive Impacts to the City of Omaha

Table 10 reflects the most likely approximation of the savings to the City of Omaha.

Table 9

Operational Cost to Develop One Unit or House

General Categories	All Costs	Primary Costs
Acquisition	\$500.00	\$500.00
Construction/Rehabilitation Costs		
Basic Construction Costs	\$60,000.00	
O & P	\$3,000.00	
Contingency	\$1,000.00	
Other	\$1,000.00	
Projected “Hard Costs”	\$65,000.00	\$65,000.00
“Soft Costs”		
Architectural/Engineering	\$1,000.00	
Supervision	\$6,000.00	
Insurance	\$500.00	
Marketing/Sales	\$5,000.00	
Legal/Accounting	\$1,000.00	
Contingency	\$1,000.00	
Projected “Soft Costs	\$14,500.00	14,500.00
Estimated Development Costs		\$80,000.00
Projected Selling Price	\$95,000.00	
Loss Development Cost	\$80,000.00	
Projected Profit per Unit	\$15,000.00	

Source: Operation Phoenix (n.d.)

Table 10

Reduction in Expenses to the City per 12 Renovated Properties

Categories	Cost
Demolition	\$120,000.00
Taxes in areas	\$24,000.00
Administrative Level A	\$23,040.00
Administrative Level B	\$18,240.00
Miscellaneous assessments (weeds, etc.)	\$1,800.00
*Projected savings on 12 renovated properties	\$187,080.00

Source: City of Omaha Planning Department-Community Development Division (2014).

Table 11 shows the cumulative likely effect of adding 12 newly renovated residences to the city tax rolls in a one-year period.

Table 11

Increase in Taxable Revenue to the City per 12 Renovated Properties in One Calendar Year

	Cost
*Increase in Property Tax Revenue	\$36,000.00
*Plus Projected Savings	\$187,080.00
*Total positive value to the city of Omaha	\$223,080.00

Source: Douglas County Treasurer (2015)

Contribution of the City of Omaha

Campbell (2014) stated that Operation Phoenix would ask for a capital investment from the city of Omaha in order to fund the first three properties. The estimate for each property is \$90,000 so the total amount of the request is for \$250,000 with some start-up contingency costs built in to the investment. This investment will enable the project to begin. The sale of rehabbed properties will fund the next three properties, and so forth.

The result will be 12 renovated properties. The positive impacts to the city will nearly offset the original capital investment from Omaha's citizens. We are open to a review of the project after completion of the first three properties. This review can take place sooner if needed.

We examined the positive impacts for the city of Omaha, the state of Nebraska and the released ex-convicts. Also reviewed were the tangible, intangible costs, *IF-THEN* statements are included with defined cost amounts. We reviewed standard and union carpenter wages. We reviewed the Nebraska Department of Corrections recidivism rates and the cost savings to the state when a released inmate does not recidivate. This chapter also discussed alternate methods of home ownership and briefly on home financing. We further reviewed the financial impact to the city of Omaha of the current amount of vacant lots, which includes maintenance of weeds, lot clean-up, and funds lost to the city of Omaha. Finally, I compared the costs of new construction to those of renovated property, and the positive impact the program would have for the city of Omaha.

Chapter Five

Conclusion

I provided the introduction for my fiscal model program theory proposal for training reentry ex-convicts in the construction trades. Through this program proposal, the ex-convicts would earn a training wage of \$12.00 per hour. They would remodel abandoned houses, which would then be sold to qualified buyers. The houses would be returned to the city tax rolls, adding approximately \$2,000 per house per year to the city coffers.

As a teacher, builder and a fully pardoned ex-felon, it is my vision, purpose and mission to pay forward the valuable lessons I learned through developing a sustainable program theory model. I plan to convince ex-felons, developers, the city of Omaha, the state of Nebraska, and ultimately the United States federal government.

As the literature indicates, national jobless rates and unemployment rates for released inmates still average 50% or higher in many parts of the U.S. (Greenfield, 2011). I examined existing construction building programs inside and outside prison walls in various states, including Prairie Gold Homes of Lincoln, Nebraska. This organization has a very strong partnership with the Nebraska Department of Corrections, modeling an inside-the-walls program that builds on-site or modular homes with four to five trustee inmates at a time. The Nebraska Department of Corrections and Prairie Gold Homes, under the leadership of Ms. Renee Bauer, started their partnership four years ago.

The purpose of the study has been to develop a fiscal model program theory proposal and to analyze costs and benefits to the model. Additional long-term benefits to

this model include stabilized neighborhoods and improved public schools. At state and national levels, we can anticipate lower aggregate incarceration costs, reduced demand for prison construction, and a decrease in incarceration and recidivism rates. A sustainable program will offer long-term social, economic, and individual benefits.

The corresponding logic model illustrates the program theory-driven evaluations through proposed inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes (see Table 1) (Chen, 2005; University of Wisconsin, 2015; Wilder Research, 2009). Normative prescriptive program theory and causative descriptive program theory are based upon causal, intervention, and action hypotheses. These hypotheses examine and use *IF-THEN* evidence to establish connections between what is expected and what is to be accomplished (University of Wisconsin, 2015; Wilder Research, 2009). A *Program Action Logic Model* of the *Inputs* (What is Invested), *Outputs Activities* (What is Done), and *Outputs Participation* (Who is Served) was discussed and defined. Mid-term and long-term results were also defined, along with costs for expected tangible and intangible costs.

I discussed the feasibility of tangible and intangible costs, and soft and hard costs associated with the project. Included in these costs are breakdowns for the American Institute of Architects' (AIA) different construction and architectural divisions for home construction and remodeling. Costs are also associated and defined within each of the *IF/THEN* Statements where feasible.

I described the Nebraska recidivism rates. I examined the aggregate cost of incarceration, the average cost of incarceration in the Nebraska penal system, and the benefit through savings to the taxpayer when the released inmate does not recidivate. The

proposed wages of these participants was explained as well as the released citizens' earning potential, training regimen, and education opportunities. Charts and information illustrated positive impacts to the City of Omaha, the individual participants and ex-con students, neighborhoods, and the state of Nebraska.

Program Feasibility and Sustainability

I will now discuss the feasibility and sustainability of the program. The effect this program could have in reducing recidivism at the state prison level through job creation and through adding to property tax rolls is profound. I will use as my framework Maslow's hierarchy of needs and Becker's human capital theory. Perhaps we are not merely looking at these individuals finding purpose, hope, and rebuilding their lives. Their empowered total contribution could be societal impact, as they build entire neighborhoods and communities by rehabbing one home and one street at a time.

This program has the potential for significant economic, social, and psychological impacts, not only by building individual skills and self-esteem among ex-convicts, but also by building safer, more economical, and more livable communities. Instead of creating social discards, by training and empowering convicted ex-felons we can change hearts and minds. The newly trained workers will be renewed, motivated and purposeful in their lives; they will feel as if they are once again contributing members of our society, and deserving of the same opportunities as any other member of society. I can envision less policing, fewer public liabilities in terms of legal settlements and property damage, deterred gang violence, and safer neighborhoods. The trainee ex-convicts would be positive, rather than negative, examples in a program that has national potential.

Theoretical Framework

Maslow's hierarchy of needs. My theoretical framework used is based upon Maslow's hierarchy of needs, and Becker's human capital theory. Maslow (1943) stated that people are motivated to achieve certain needs. When one need is fulfilled, a person seeks to fulfill the next one, and so on. The best known version of Maslow's (1943), hierarchy of needs lists five motivational needs, often depicted as hierarchical levels within a pyramid. This five-stage model is normally divided into categories of needs such as physiological, safety, love and esteem, growth needs, and self-actualization. The basic needs according to Maslow, are those that motivate people when they are unmet. They need to fulfill such needs and the needs will become stronger the longer they are denied. For example, the longer a person goes without food, the hungrier that person will become. A person's sense of fulfillment cannot ascend to the next level of the pyramid until they successfully complete the previous level (see Figure 3).



Source: McLeod (2014)

Figure 3. Maslow's hierarchy.

Maslow's (1943) hierarchy lists five motivational need:

1. *Physiological* – air, food, drink, shelter, warmth, the family connection.
2. *Safety needs* – protection from elements, security, order, law, stability, freedom from fear.
3. *Love and belongingness needs* – friendship, intimacy, affection and love, - from work group, family, friends, and romantic relationships.
4. *Esteem needs* – achievement, mastery, independence, status, dominance, prestige, self-respect, and respect from others.
5. *Self-Actualization needs* – realizing personal potential, self-fulfillment, seeking personal growth and peak experiences.

Let us examine each level of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs as they may apply to incarcerated inmates, beginning with Level I (physiological needs).

Physiological needs. Physiological needs, according to Maslow (1943), include air, food, drink, shelter, warmth, and reconnecting with family. Being incarcerated in prison for any length of time can cause a human being to lose sight of daily realities, such as affording and purchasing food, and planning and cooking meals. Affording and acquiring shelter for one evening, much less long-term, may be a challenge. Many released ex-felons may have no place to go on their first night of release, and may have limited funds. The habitability of the shelter they can afford may be dehumanizing. The ability to sleep in a different environment may be limited; family supports may be nonexistent. For many ex-convicts, weak family structures were how their difficulties began.

McLeod (2014) suggested that Maslow (1943) first stated that the availability of basics such as heat or air conditioning may temper how the individual sees himself. Does the new home have good air quality, with a furnace and an air conditioner? Does he feel worthy of comfortable surroundings? Has the inmate lost the ability to have

good and proper sleep habits? Unless these inmates have exceptional will power, and committed family, church, and mentoring support groups, recidivism rates will not change. If basic economic needs are not met, and if the newly released inmates do not experience feelings of support and care from their community, their motivation to move up the pyramid will diminish. Therefore, meeting the trainees' basic needs is the primary concern.

The reason for the training wage of \$12.00 per hour is to enable each person to afford food, clothing, and shelter. My program will provide an annual income of \$24,000, a wage substantially higher than the federal minimum wage. This income level ensures that a single individual is above the federal poverty guideline wage of \$11,970 (HHS, 2015). Dignity begins with the ability to feed, house and clothe himself.

Safety needs. Safety needs include protection from the elements, security, order, law, stability, and freedom from fear. Being incarcerated for several years can cause one to lose self-confidence. Regaining the necessary motivation, establishing zones of freedom, feeling safe, managing time wisely, and attempting to overcome the fear of failing, are all difficult tasks to complete without a very strong network of support. Because no man is an island, the reason for group training is to develop a network or cohort of mutually supportive peers who can counsel, motivate, and rely upon one another.

Love and belongingness needs. Maslow's category of love and belongingness needs include friendship, intimacy, affection, and love, whether from work groups, family, friends, or through romantic relationships. The ability to rekindle old

friendships, to build new friendships, to forgive and be forgiven by family, neighborhood, church and work groups, are all essential to feeling loved. Regardless of what external support systems may be available to any single person, the training program offers camaraderie, a supportive leader/trainer to look up to, and individuals that the reentry citizens are accountable to and for: if one fails, the rest may be delayed in their mission and training.

Esteem needs. The fourth tier of the pyramid, esteem needs, includes achievement, mastery, independence, status, dominance, prestige, self-respect, and respect from others. Once the reentry citizen experiences the sense of being loved, giving love, being a friend, making new friends, keeping friends, intimacy and romantic relationships with his wife, and of reestablishing the family dynamics, he will feel more independent. The prestige, purpose, respect, and self-respect developed through skills and work will help each worker want to maintain his renewed sense of self-worth, leading to level five: self-actualization.

Self-actualization needs. Self-actualization needs include realizing personal potential, self-fulfillment, and seeking personal growth and peak experiences. At this level, the former inmate is on his way to re-integrating back into society. He will most likely never re-offend or recidivate. He will be motivated and he find purpose in his life. By realizing his personal potential, finding self-fulfillment, and experiencing personal growth, he has obtained his short-term goals. Long range planning is now a possibility. He will become a role model and leader in his own right.

Human capital theory. Gary Becker, Nobel Laureate in Economics, said that he has tried to steer economic thinking away from classical economic theories of enlightened self-interest regarding human behavior. Becker (1992) believed that human behavior is driven by a much richer set of values and preferences.

Human capital theory includes considering the reasons human activities and ideas, such as discrimination, affect society and the work place, crime and punishment, education, and the dissolution of the family. Part of Becker's (1992) human capital theory attempts to explain the causes and effects of human behavior. Reasons people commit crimes and are incarcerated frequently have roots in economics. Investments in a person's training and education are always paid off. We will discuss in further detail Becker's thoughts on each of these categories of:

- discrimination;
- crime and punishment;
- education; and
- formation, dissolution, and structure of families

Discrimination. Becker (1992) contrasted discrimination concerns with classical economics. According to classical economy theory, customers only care about the quality of goods or services provided. In practice, consumers often discriminate because of race, gender, and other personal characteristics, which in turn may be based on tastes, attitudes, and experiences. Employees may refuse to work for a woman or a black person, even if they would be well paid to do so. As an example, Becker hypothesized

that a customer may prefer not to deal with a black car salesman, regardless of the price or quality of the vehicle.

To Becker (1992), actual discrimination in the market place against a minority group depends on the combined discrimination of employers, workers, consumers, schools, and governments. In theory, given the discrepancy in wages between equally productive blacks and whites, or between women and men, companies that behaved rationally in a classical economics sense could reduce labor costs by specializing in employing mainly blacks and women. That they do not generally do so is entirely due to choices that are outside of purely classical economics. Similarly, discrimination may possibly have an economic effect on the released ex-convicts on several levels and reasons. Governments, organizations, and individuals may simply avoid associating with ex-convicts, regardless of the work being accomplished.

Crime and punishment. Becker (1992) said that one way total public spending on fighting crime can be reduced, while keeping the mathematically expected punishment unchanged, is by offsetting a cut in expenditures on catching criminals with a sufficient increase in the punishment to those convicted. That is, he is describing a cost-benefit scenario in which officials determine if the economic cost of an offense is worth the cost of punishing the offender. If a man steals a \$3 loaf of bread, is it worth \$33,000 – the cost of one year of incarceration in Nebraska – to punish him? Risk-preferring individuals are more deterred from crime by a higher probability of conviction than by severe punishments. To Becker, optimal behavior by the State would balance the reduced spending on police and courts from lowering the probability of conviction

against the preference of risk-preferring criminals for a lesser certainty of punishment.

The State should also be concerned about the likelihood of punishing innocent persons.

In a perfectly rational, economic society, people would be treated equally: crime rates, prison terms, conviction levels, unemployment levels, would all be equal. The fact that discrepancies exist is proof that discrimination exists. The greatest controversies surround the question of whether capital punishment deters murders, a controversy that is far from being resolved. It is already clear that the presence of prisons does not deter crime.

Education. Human capital analysis begins with the assumption that individuals decide on their education, training, and medical care by weighing the benefits and costs of each, including the deferred benefits and deferred costs. The modern role of education, particularly when we consider that the policy response to opportunity is a prescription to acquire more jobs skills or more education. The more educated a person is, the more likely he or she is to be employed, healthy, and adequately housed.

To Becker (1992), human capital is so uncontroversial nowadays that it may be difficult to appreciate the hostility in the 1950s and 1960s toward the approach that went with the term. The very concept of human capital was alleged to be demeaning because it treated people as machines. Only gradually did economists, as well as others, accept the concept of human capital as a valuable tool in the analysis of economic and social issues.

Becker's (1992) work on human capital theory began with an effort to calculate both private and social rates of return to men, women, and minority groups from

investments in different levels of education. Eventually it became clear that the analysis of human capital could help explain many phenomena in labor markets in the economy at large. The sizeable growth in earnings inequality in the United States during the 1980s, which caused so much political discussion, is largely explained by higher returns to the more educated and better trained.

Formation, dissolution, and structure of families. The rational choice analysis of family behavior builds on maximizing behavior, investments in human capital, the allocation of time, and discrimination against women and other groups. Relations among family members differ from those among employees of firms and members of other organizations. The interactions between husbands, wives, parents, and children are more likely to be motivated by love, obligation, guilt, and a sense of duty by narrowly interpreted self-interest. Dysfunctions within a family structure, such as divorce, may be attributed to a generational environment, and to the amount and level such as education of each of the members of a particular family (Becker, 1992).

Discussion and Implications

I believe both Maslow's (1943) and Becker's (1992) theories successfully permit us to interpret the perplexing problem of the revolving door of recidivism. As I reviewed Maslow's hierarchy of needs, and the structure of the archetypal pyramid, as well as Becker's human capital theory, I became aware of the fundamental and closely related nature of the framework of each.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs. With sufficient income, ex-convicts can acquire their own food, a habitable shelter, decent clothing, and perhaps even their own

transportation. Through their training, they can witness leadership and develop lasting relationships with people who are similarly situated. Eventually, they can encourage one another. As a cohort, they can learn and work as a caring team. These friendships may fill needed affiliation gaps. Finally, these men will be achieving leaders and role models in their own right.

Becker's human capital theory. As stated earlier, many convicted felons do not have ties to a family or to the community – the opportunities to develop anchors in the outside world that will help keep them outside the walls, and will enable them to create increasingly sustaining relationships. Similarly, Becker's (1992) human capital theory highlights the value of education not only to the individual, but to society. Trained and educated workers will always choose opportunity over incarceration. Individuals who are unskilled and who see few options for their lives are more likely to commit crimes.

Individual benefits. If they have no opportunity to develop skills during or immediately after their incarceration, and if they experience discrimination because of their ex-offender status, they will have few options but to live the lives they know. Thus, recidivism would be the natural outcome. If instead they are educated, they can care for themselves. Instead of costing society as prisoners, they can pay taxes and contribute to society.

Neighborhood benefits. Another way they will contribute to society is by repairing houses. The derelict houses, which are a drain on the local economy in their present condition, will be transformed into habitable and taxable units. Qualified buyers will purchase and maintain the houses. The taxes paid will be channeled into repaired

and well-lit streets, clean and safe public parks, more highly trained police officers, and most importantly, quality public schools that are staffed with qualified teachers. The schools will educate young people who will, in turn, acquire good-quality jobs and pay taxes. With fewer individuals in prison, communities can instead invest in other forms of infrastructure, such as still more schools and teachers, better transportation, high-quality telecommunications, and other community goods that encourage investment and ever more high-quality jobs.

City benefits. Cities, in this case, Omaha, will have an increased stream of revenue, both in the form of income and property taxes received, and in money not spent on mowing vacant lots, in tearing down uninhabitable homes. They will also be less concerned about liabilities that may be associated with policing and incarceration. Safer communities have lower insurance rates, fewer police injuries, and attract more businesses - which also pay taxes and hire tax-paying workers.

State benefits. The state of Nebraska would also benefit. The most obvious benefit is to the overcrowded prison system. Instead of being pushed to build additional prisons, the prison population would be reduced to a size that is closer to capacity. The prisons could invest additional revenues in their own training and mental health counseling programs. Instead of incarcerating re-offenders well into old age -- with the medical requirements and expenses of an aging population -- offenders can serve their sentences, and then emerge with the opportunity to remake their lives when they are at an age at which they can still make a positive contribution. Similarly, a state with a highly

trained population and strong infrastructural development attracts tax-paying national businesses, which hire skilled workers.

National benefits. This program model also has national implications. Nebraska could be a model for the rest of the country. As noted above, the opportunities are social as well as economic. Funds not spent on incarceration can be diverted to the infrastructure that drives economic growth and development. Trained people who are not in prison pay more, and higher taxes. The rates for all taxpayers could be lowered. Sometimes, doing well also allows you do good. Through a small notion, giving hope and purpose to a person who has never had much of either one, we truly can make a better world.

Dr. Martha Bruckner, Superintendent of Council Bluffs, Iowa, Community School District since 2007, and my friend and mentor, was selected as Outstanding Superintendent for the State of Iowa for the 2015-2016 school year. The district's motto is, "We defy gravity, serving one student at a time." Dr. Bruckner kindly suggested to me that perhaps that is what I am doing, defying gravity, training and serving one student-inmate at a time as they rehab one house at a time (M. Bruckner, personal communication, October 20, 2015).

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Appendix A

Cost Breakdowns – Recap Sheets

Construction Costs

Labor & Materials Costs

Costs for One Average Rehabbed House

Divisions	Div. Totals
Division 1—General Conditions	
1—1000 Mobilization	\$200.00
1—4523 Permit, inspection	200.00
1—5000(A) Sanitation	225.00
1—5000(B) Temporary utilities	225.00
1—7419 Dumpster, debris removal	900.00
Estimate for Division 1	\$1,750.00
Division 2—Existing Conditions	
2—4120(A) Selective demo exterior	\$125.00
2—4120(A) Selective demo interior	125.00
Estimate for Division 2	\$250.00
Division 3—Concrete (Plug) 5 cu/yds	
3—1000 Concrete forming	\$275.00
3—3000 Cast in pace	275.00
Estimate for Division 3	\$550.00
Division 6—Woods, Plastics & Composites	
6—1000 Rough carpentry	\$280.00
6—1100 Framing & Sheathing	400.00
6—4600 Wood trim, base and	610.50
6—4100 Casework, cabinets	625.00
Estimate for Division 6	\$1915.50
Division 7—Thermal & Moisture	
7—3010(A) Ice & water	\$60.00
7—3010(B) 30# felt	95.00
7—3113 Asphalt shingles	1,500.00

Divisions	Div. Totals	
7—6200 Sheet metal flashing	200.00	
7—1000 Misc.	100.00	
<i>Sub-total roofing and related</i>	<i>1,505.00</i>	
7—2115 Batt insulation plug @ .SS	550.00	
7—2800 Vapor barrier (plug)	150.00	
7—2126 Blown insulation @ \$1.00	1,000.00	
<i>Sub-total insulation</i>	<i>1,700.00</i>	
7—4623 Wood siding	500.00	
<i>Sub-total wood siding</i>	<i>500.00</i>	
Estimate for Division 7		\$3,705.00
Division 8—Openings		
8—1416 (A) Doors, exterior	\$400.00	
8—1416 (B) Doors, interior	250.00	
8—5200 Windows 10 @ \$250.00	2,500.00	
Estimate for Division 8		\$3,150.00
Division 9—Finishes		
9—2900 GWB & related items	\$1,850.00	
9—6516 Resilient flooring	175.00	
9—6816 Carpeting	2,000.00	
9—9100 (A) Interior	500.00	
9—9100 (B) Exterior	350.00	
Estimate for Division 9		\$4,875.00
Division 32—Exterior		
32—1313 Concrete plug 5 cu/yd	\$500.00	
3200 Landscaping	200.00	

Divisions	Div. Totals
3201 Contingent amount	40.00
Estimate for Division 32	1,100.00
Total Division Costs	\$17,295.50

Summary of Division Costs and Mechanical

Summary of Divisions	Cost
Division 1—General Conditions	\$1,750.00
Division 2—Existing Conditions	250.00
Division 3—Concrete	550.00
Division 6—Woods, Plastics & Composites	1,915.00
Division 7—Thermal & Moisture	3,705.00
Division 8—Openings	3,150.00
Division 9—Finishes	4,875.00
Division 32—Exterior Improvements	1,100.00
Total Division Costs	\$17,295.00
Summary Total	\$17,295.00
Mechanical	
Electrical	\$5,000.00
Plumbing	\$5,000.00
HVAC	\$5,000.00
Projected Total	\$32,295.00

Summary of Labor and Materials

	Wages
Estimated Materials	\$32,295.00
Estimated Labor*	28,080.00
Estimated Materials & Labor	\$60,375.00
*Labor Breakdown	
Man power wage rate	
Foreman/Trainer	\$22.50
Employee 1	\$12.00
Employee 2	\$12.00
Employee 3	\$12.00
Hourly rate for crew	
1 Trainer and 3 Employees	\$58.50
Project duration 12 weeks or 90 days	
Foreman/Trainer	\$10,800.00
Employee 1	5,760.00
Employee 2	5,760.00
Employee 3	5,760.00
Total Hourly rate	\$28,080.00
Projected Selling Price	\$95,000.00
Estimated Costs, Labor, & Materials	\$60,375.00
Estimated Soft Costs	\$14,500.00