

## **K9 Unit Supports Northeast Iowa Community with Help from USDA Grant**

*by Cecilia Lynch*

Postville, Iowa, population 2,500, is a hard-working community in the northeast corner of the state supported by an international workforce. A sign at the edge of town reads “Hometown to the World.” People come here to work in local industries, including meatpacking and manufacturing.

As the community has grown over the years, local leaders sought to better support city functions by modernizing law enforcement operations to increase public safety. The town bought in-vehicle cameras and body-camera equipment for the police force.

In September of 2024, K9 Officer Jekyll, a large German Shephard, reported for duty with the Postville Police Department. However, the new dog did not fit in the existing vehicular kennel. The police vehicle that carried the kennel required extensive and repeated maintenance, creating an additional strain on the department's resources.

The mayor of the town turned to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development (RD) for assistance in funding a new city vehicle with K9 equipment. He talked with Ethan Kruger, the RD programs specialist responsible for the area. He encouraged the mayor to apply for an Economic Impact Initiative Grant on behalf of Postville. If the application was approved, USDA would be able to award an amount matching the city's own money set aside for the project.

“When I met with city leaders, I was impressed by their commitment to making their community a better place,” said Ethan. “With their cooperation, the grant process was straightforward and simple. It’s rewarding to know Jekyll has the equipment he needs to serve and protect the people of Postville.”

Darcy Radloff, City Clerk for Postville, coordinated with USDA Rural Development staff on the grant application. “It was easy to work with Ethan on the paperwork,” she said. “Since the grant award, the police department has been able to add to the force, and we are all happy with the new vehicle and the service it helps us provide.”

On November 8, 2024, the news was announced—the city of Postville received a grant for \$48,600 for a new pursuit-rated, canine-outfitted law enforcement vehicle.

USDA Economic Impact Initiative Grants provide funding to assist in the development of essential community facilities in rural areas facing unemployment and economic challenges. Eligible areas may include cities, villages, townships, towns and federally recognized Tribal Land with no more than 20,000 residents. Other criteria for eligibility



also applies. To view more information on USDA Rural Development Community Programs, [click this text](#).

Date of Obligation: 09/09/2024

Obligation Amount: \$48,600

Congressional District: IA-02