



10.05

**For additional information, contact:**

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**Please submit applications as pdf file, 5 MB or less, with supporting documentation as attachments within the application and bookmarked.**

**Applications should be submitted to Lori Cole at [lori.a.cole@nebraska.gov](mailto:lori.a.cole@nebraska.gov)**  
**Once all sections are determined to be included, applications will be sent to reviewers.**

Certification will be good for five years, with annual reviews of websites. Websites not current and consistent with information will result in suspension of certification and benefits associated with certification.

The Nebraska Diplomats Economic Development Certified Community program for Nebraska communities is administered by the Department of Economic Development.

### **Program Purpose**

In the extremely competitive field of economic development, those with the highest degree of readiness are most likely to succeed. The purpose for this program is to accommodate new business prospect inquiries and support expansions. By going through the application process, communities will have the opportunity to learn what the relevant needs for various projects are and how to strategically plan to address those needs.

### **Program Requirements**

- Designation or establishment of a local economic development organization and formation of a prospect handling team
- Completion of a comprehensive community assessment and community profile and development of a strategic plan to address deficiencies
- Updated and consistent web presence through local site, LOIS and NEDI
- Establishment of an active business retention and expansion program
- Community identified targets/markets showing stakeholder participation
- Identification of, at a minimum, one available industrial / commercial site OR one available building
- Infrastructure capacity to meet needs of identified target **or** plan with budget and timelines showing how needs could be met
- Local financing and incentive assistance

### **Recertification**

Every five years, communities with EDCC designation must submit a recertification application that includes the following:

- An updated community profile
- A long-range strategic plan
- Annual economic development work plan
- A long-range funding plan
- An economic development evaluation

Although this program is not realistic for all communities, the processes to help identify capacities, stimulate focused planning and deliberately structure web sites are invaluable for all communities, regardless of size. For those communities that will not be able to meet the requirements for this certification, we would recommend exploring the Nebraska Community Improvement Program. For information about NCIP and/or the NCIP Leadership Development Challenge, contact Christina Bartels at 800-426-6505, 402-471-3172, or [Christina.bartels@nebraska.gov](mailto:Christina.bartels@nebraska.gov)

## SECTION ONE

### ORGANIZATION:

1. Local Government Support
  - Letter from applicant municipal government identifying lead economic development agency and local contact person for this program.
  - Resolutions of support from applicant community.  
(See sample resolution at end of this application.)
  - Letters of support from any regional economic development entities such as multi-county agencies or districts.
  
2. Organizational Structure of Designated Lead Agency
  - City government
  - Chamber of Commerce
  - Development entity
  - Other (describe) \_\_\_\_\_
  - Tax status
    - 501©3
    - 501©4
    - 501©6
    - Other (describe) \_\_\_\_\_
  
3. What is the mission statement of lead economic development agency?
  
4. Where could bylaws or charter of lead development agency be reviewed?  
(Bylaws need to address leadership, including how board members are selected, their terms of office, and total length of service allowed.)
  
5. Describe organizational staffing and collaborative relationships with regional professional staff, such as
  - economic development partners
  - utility providers
  - colleges
  - REAP
  - other development resources available in your region
  - Nebraska Diplomats
  - Do not include financial resources here.
  
6. Describe economic development collaborative relationships with local organizations.
  - chamber of commerce
  - convention and visitor's bureau (CVB)
  - housing organizations or developers
  - LB840 committee
  - other entities.

7. Who are the local Nebraska Diplomats? How does the community utilize them? i.e., prospect team, BR&E calls, other?
8. Who within your community represents the community in NEDA (Nebraska Economic Developers Association)?
9. One page summary of Economic Development **strategic plan** including process for how developed. (must be current or reviewed within past 12 months)
  - Please attach Economic Development strategic plan or provide link to online version.  
(This may be part of a larger community plan, but must have a section with an ED focus or clearly defined economic development goals.)
10. Current (within past 12 months) economic development work plan.
  - Timelines, responsible parties for action items, and budget.
11. Web site & collateral marketing materials (working links)
  - Community/Economic development web site URL and criteria.
    - a. Identification
      - a. Name of community or organization
      - b. Name of STATE – Nebraska clearly shown
      - c. Map showing location of community within Nebraska (preferred)
      - d. Location identification should be found on EVERY page (e.g., on secondary pages).
      - e. Action photos showcasing your community
    - b. Contact Information
      - a. Full/complete information (physical address, telephone with area code, email)
      - b. Found clearly on home page and in the footer/header/sidebar of EVERY page on site
      - c. Emails should be “hot” or working. They should be spelled out – not somebody’s name underlined or a sentence saying “email us.” Remember the people that want to print off the paper and call or email you later.
      - d. If the page has a “Contact Us” button or tab – it should open another page on the website with the same look and feel and it should contain contact information. This should NEVER be a link that automatically opens an email.
    - c. Navigation
      - a. Should be intuitively easy to follow
      - b. Easy to identify where at all times within the site
      - c. Provides way back home without having to use “back” button

- d. Economic Development page
    - a. A page dedicated to what this organization or community is going to do for the prospect with CONTACT info.
    - b. Should have dedicated place within website – preferably own tab
  - e. Online Properties
    - a. Should have working database of available properties that includes, at a minimum, basic data on property and area, photos, and contact information.
    - b. Local economic development site must have linkage to LOIS and NEDI sites...when tying in to 3<sup>rd</sup> party database (e.g., NEDI, LOIS, FastFacilities, etc.) need to have DIRECT links to their specific properties.
- Link in application to printable flyer for community
  - Show economic development marketing materials either through scanned image or link to material

12. Summary of BR&E program.

- How many businesses/industries visited with annually?
- How are visits conducted and who is involved?
- What is done with data collected?
- How is follow up initiated and tracked?
- Short explanation of recognition program for local industries/businesses.

13. Department of Economic Development (DED) and Economic Development Allies' Trainings.

- Submit a list of those members of your staff, committees, and community who have attended the following educational opportunities **within the past three years and the date attended.**
  - ✓ DED or other economic development briefing or orientation.
  - ✓ Marketing training.
  - ✓ Prospect proposal training.
  - ✓ Mock prospect visit.

Contact program administrator prior to completion of application if your community has not participated in prospect proposal training, mock prospect visit or "live" RFP in past 24 months. You may be waived from the prospect proposal training and mock prospect visit, or we can get a schedule set for you and your board for needed training

Approved trainings include specific local trainings conducted by DED or partners and certain regional, state and national trainings. Trainings do not have to have been conducted by DED but must be approved.

Contact program coordinator for information about approved trainings and other questions on this section.

## SECTION TWO

### COMMUNITY-IDENTIFIED TARGETS or MARKETS:

#### 1. Target or Market Focuses

- Briefly identify community's existing industry sector(s) and geographic focuses, as well as any identified unique economic development marketing opportunities.
- Describe how the target industries or market segments for your community were determined and provide brief overview of marketing plan to address identified targets.

#### 2. Workforce

*(The community must be able to **prove** it has a quality workforce meeting the requirements of the target market. If specific skills have been identified within the target market, list those skills and document your ability to provide a business with a labor force meeting those specific skill needs.)*

- Summarize results of current (within 2 years) labor survey; who assisted, date conducted or information compiled, and highlighted results. Provide link to actual survey if available on your website or as an attachment.

#### 3. Workforce Training and Continuing Education

- Submit list of local workforce development (expansion or recruitment) testing and training resources (identify entity and include a one-sentence explanation of the resource).
- Submit a list of local continuing education and higher education opportunities, including distance learning.

## SECTION THREE

### INFRASTRUCTURE:

#### 1. Infrastructure

- Submit known infrastructure requirements for community's targeted development. (i.e. ethanol targets require rail and gas; distribution targets require wide turn access and 50 acre sites; some targets may require large water or wastewater treatment capabilities.) Identify any known obstacles and the community's plan to remedy any deficiencies. (See Section Five, 4.f)

## 2. Communications

- Submit summary describing local telecommunications options and issues. If issues have been identified, what remedial options are being explored?
- Identify nearest Points of Presence (POP)
- Address cell phone coverage
- What are local broadband capabilities
- Any other relevant telecommunications or technology issues?

## 3. Housing

- Review of housing needs assessment for community.

## 4. Child Care \ Adult Day Care

- Review child care options and plans to address needs.
- Does your community have adult day care?

# **SECTION FOUR**

## **LOCAL FINANCING AND BUSINESS ASSISTANCE:**

### 1. Local Financing and Incentives

- Submit a summary of local or regional financing and incentive options. (*Do not include any state incentives in this section.*) Summary might include brief descriptions of LOCAL or regional revolving loan fund access, "LB840" guidelines, CDBG reuse funds, identification of private investment clubs, etc.

### 2. Business and Entrepreneurial Assistance

- Submit a summary of local or regional business assistance programs, including technical support, management support, and entrepreneurial support.

## SECTION FIVE

### **SITES AND BUILDINGS INFORMATION:**

A community needs to have an available building **or** site, developed or in process of being developed, to be considered eligible for certification. Items in this section are marketable with no liens, etc.

1. **All** available buildings are entered on LocationOne Information System (LOIS) **and** Nebraska Economic Development Information (NEDI).
  - List the available building names used on LOIS and NEDI and provide link to each site.
  
2. **Controlled** sites are listed on LOIS **and** NEDI. Control can be in the form of ownership, option, or right-of-first refusal.
  - Site names used on LOIS **and** NEDI listing. Identify if site is a business park or industrial site. Provide link to site(s).
  
3. **Existing Building (if building used for purpose of this application)**
  - Submit, as an attachment, documentation of price-control (could be letter of, agreement with owner, ownership or of existing building suitable for industrial, warehouse, distribution, the service-sector industries or one of your target markets). Label attachment.
  - Submit link to populated "Printable Brochure" of building.
  - Describe potential users for the building.
  
4. **Site Development (if site being used for purpose of this application)**
  - a. Submit documentation as an attachment of a controlled industrial site. Label attachment. Control can be in the form of ownership, option, or right-of-first refusal.
  - b. Phase I environmental assessments complete and available for review (where?). List date of assessment and briefly describe findings.
  - c. Property has no liens against it? List location of title.
  - d. Submit documentation of basic infrastructure in place at site.
    - Water
    - Waste water
    - Electrical
    - Natural Gas
    - Roads
    - Telecommunications

- e. What is **excess capacity** for basic infrastructure at site?
  - Water
  - Waste water
  - Electrical
  - Natural Gas
  
- f. Describe if utility redundancy is available.
  - Electrical
  - Water
  - Telecommunications
  
- g. If basic infrastructure is not in place at site, explain
  - Process
  - Timelines
  - Budget
  
- h. Submit timeline for building permit process and identify steps if “quick permit” is requested.
  
- i. Is site in a flood plain, contain wetlands or home to endangered species?
  
- j. Ensure site is zoned appropriately for intended use with zoning plan. What is site zoned and zoning plan located where?
  
- k. Identify local incentives (non-cash) for site development (i.e., site grading, infrastructure extension, and road enhancements).
  
- l. Provide a summary addressing ingress and egress road considerations
  - ✓ Weight limits
  - ✓ Traffic flow concerns
  - ✓ Four seasons road(s)
  - ✓ Who is the district DOR engineer for your site?
  
- m. Rail served? Appraisal of potential rail development/needs at site and discussion with railroad regarding development?

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Applicant Community

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Applicant Community  
Official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Lead Agency Designated  
By Applicant Community

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature and Title of Agency  
Representative

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

SAMPLE

**Resolution of Support**

*WHEREAS*, local municipal government, county government, and regional economic development entities must provide leadership and coordination for economic development efforts; and

*WHEREAS*, economic development needs can best be solved through a cooperative effort between local, county, regional and state economic development organizations and entities; and

*WHEREAS*, there is a need to recognize and promote our community’s organizational readiness, infrastructure investment, ability to respond to business needs, and

*WHEREAS*, the Economic Development Certified Community Program, administered by the Nebraska Department of Economic Development, has been reviewed and found to be a program promoting our community’s economic development preparedness;

*THEREFORE*, the village board or city council of \_\_\_\_\_, the county board of supervisors or county commissioners of \_\_\_\_\_ county, or the board of the \_\_\_\_\_ (regional economic development entity) do herewith pledge their full support, endorsement, and cooperation for participation in Nebraska’s Economic Development Certified Community Program by \_\_\_\_\_  
(name of applicant village or city)

Approved this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Entity Represented \_\_\_\_\_