

Norfolk Insider

City of Norfolk, NE

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March 3, 2015

“Norfolk Certified as an Economic Development Community”

The State of Nebraska Department of Economic Development (NDED) recently recertified the community of Norfolk as an “Economic Development Certified Community.” Every five years, the NDED recertifies communities and Norfolk was previously certified in 2010. Only 36 of 520 Nebraska communities currently hold this designation.

The entire Norfolk community has stepped up to the plate when it comes to economic development. It’s not one individual or one group that has made Norfolk a place where people want to come to do business. It’s many many groups and people who promote Norfolk and strive to make it a great place to live,” said Mayor Sue Fuchtman.

According to the NDED the objectives of the certification is to: provide communities with a specific checklist of



Pictured from left: Candace Bossard, Candice Alder, Courtney Dentlinger, Brenda Hicks-Sorensen with the Nebraska Department of Economic Development and Mayor Sue Fuchtman.

items that define proactive communities; identify communities with meaningful economic development agendas and capabilities increasing their opportunities for success; recognize community organizational infrastructure readiness and ability to respond to existing and prospective business and industry needs; and encourage strategic cooperation among Nebraska’s economic development organizations.

“Our community leaders and community are great supporters for existing businesses and recruiting new businesses into Norfolk and the area. Business has great support from Mayor Fuchtman and

her staff and they work in concert very well with Economic Development Director, Courtney Dentlinger, and her staff,” said Dirk Petersen, General Manager of Nucor Steel, “We consider them partners for our four facilities in Norfolk. They are in tune to our needs as well as the services and infrastructure our business and new businesses need. I expect more strategic growth here in Norfolk under our great local leadership and the support of our community.”

Economic activity and awards were listed as part of the application process for the certification. The items listed included: Tejas Tubular building a plant in Norfolk; Black Hills Energy bringing natural gas pipeline to the area; the selling of the vacant Tyson plant to CRS Mechanical adding potentially 600 jobs; Nucor Steel \$70 million

expansion; Covidien \$6 million expansion; Petersen Ag, Nebraska Small Business of the Year, moved headquarters to Norfolk; facilitated organization of 4-Lanes 4-Nebraska; established Housing Task Force to address housing concerns; Work Task Force organized to alleviate workforce shortage; \$25,000 JOBS grant awarded; 3rd Place Mid-America Economic Development Council Award for Business Retention and Expansion program; 2nd Place Award for NorfolkNow magazine.

“Congratulations to Norfolk and their area partners on being recertified through the Nebraska Department of Economic Development’s certified community program. This certification plays a major role in being ready for growth. Going through this certification helps put all the ducks in a row, which shows the community leaders have put in the time to be ready for economic development activities,” said Thomas Higginbotham, Jr., Executive Director of the Northeast Nebraska Economic Development District.

Benefits of being certified as a Nebraska Economic Development Community according to the NDED include being marketed as such by the NDED; extra points towards NIFA Housing Application; extra points towards NEDED Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds; and being eligible for CDBG Comprehensive Revitalization funds.

“Being identified as an Economic Development Certified Community shows that the Norfolk area is aggressively active in making our community attractive to new and expanding businesses. Prospective businesses have many options when considering where they might locate and we want the Norfolk area to be on the top of every site selectors’ list,” said Mark Zimmerer, President and CEO of the Norfolk Area Chamber of Commerce.

A formal presentation of the certification took place at the Norfolk City Council meeting March 2.