



NEWS RELEASE

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Miracle Skatepark Project Awarded Significant Revitalization Grant

NORFOLK, Nebraska – The City of Norfolk is pleased to announce the award of \$425,000 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Tourism Development funds from the Nebraska Department of Economic Development. The funds will be used for renovation of Miracle Skatepark, which is located within the Veterans Memorial Park complex.

Mayor Josh Moenning discussed the collaboration it took to get to this point.

“A few years ago, a group of dedicated and passionate citizens came forward with the idea of transforming our aging skatepark into the biggest and best skate facility in the Midwest. Over a long period of planning, partnership building and collaborative effort, we are proud to say we can move from talking about this project to doing it,” Moenning said.

“And to do it, we are utilizing state grant resources from the Nebraska Department of Economic Development, who saw the recreational and tourism value of this project bringing people to our region, as well as the project’s targeted focus on making the park accessible and friendly to the needs of citizens with disabilities and special needs. I am grateful for the tireless work of the citizens’ group, city and regional economic development staff, and local tourism officials for formulating a winning proposal. This is a great example of what can come to be when citizens join together with a clear vision for improving their community.”

In June 2015, members of the citizens’ advocacy group Good Life Action Sports approached the Norfolk City Council to request upgrades to Miracle Skatepark. The Council responded by setting aside \$125,000 to be used towards the project. In addition to the monies set aside as match and leverage for the project, the Norfolk Area Visitors Bureau, the Johnny Carson Foundation, and the fundraising efforts of Good Life Action Sports secured an additional \$19,500 to be used towards the project.

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Traci Jeffrey, the director for the Norfolk Area Visitors Bureau, said the revitalization of the park will further enhance the existing attractions Norfolk boasts, as well as create more opportunities to draw visitors to the region and state.

“In 2016, we had 243,000 visitors to Madison County who spent \$40.5 million within the local economy. With the help of the CDBG funds, the revitalized skatepark will have the capacity to attract new visitors and events nearly year-round. Some events would include two-day events, three times per year from both BMX and skateboarding, Summer Best Run Contest, special needs days, and BIKE, just to name a few,” said Jeffrey.

Now, nearly 15 years after Miracle Skatepark was originally constructed, members of New Skatepark for Norfolk and Good Life Action Sports (GLAS) will see a dream realized. The park was built in 2004 using pre-fabricated, wooden ramps, but the renovation will utilize concrete, which in addition to lasting longer, has proven to be quieter than wood. Additionally, the revitalized park will be ADA accessible, opening the door for people of all abilities to use. The park will also include ADA restrooms, drinking fountains, and bleachers making the facility an attraction able to support a number of events that are envisioned by the members of GLAS.

Anthony Thompson, the president of GLAS and founder of the New Skatepark for Norfolk committee shared, “The new skatepark will serve the entire community in many beneficial ways. The skatepark will provide a safe place to participate in action sports engaging people with fitness, entertainment, and recreational opportunities. This new venue will host many new programs and events further activating Veterans Memorial Complex. The tourist attraction it provides will be incredible for the entire community. I’ve met with skateboard organizations from Colorado to Wisconsin and they are all interested in coming to the largest skatepark in Nebraska. A free public park that offers all these positive aspects and brings travelers to town is a big win for everyone. Funding and building the new skatepark is only the beginning of great things to come to my hometown. Norfolk pride!”

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