Nebraska Department of Economic Development
Leadership Community Application

For additional information, contact Brian Gaskill at 402.471.2280 or brian.gaskill@nebraska.gov.

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

Designation as a Nebraska Department of Economic Development (NDED) Leadership Community 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.

Program Purpose

Communities are facing new challenges and constant change. To successfully face the challenges ahead, communities must institute a solid planning and implementation process. In addition, communities must learn to take advantage of technology to meet objectives set throughout this process. The purpose of this program is to provide a framework for communities to follow. This framework will provide communities with a solid foundation to meet these challenges and successfully adapt to the changing world around them.

Program Requirements Summary

- Community-identified needs assessment showing community-wide involvement;
- Completion of a community assessment and community profile and development of a strategic plan;
- Development of a comprehensive plan, capital improvement plan, zoning and subdivision ordinances, building codes, code enforcement and a building permit process;
- Updated and consistent web presence through local site and LOIS;
- Establishment of an active business retention and expansion program;
- Financing options for goals set for community in strategic planning process and/or comprehensive plan.

**Initial Certification Process**

Once the application is submitted to the Department, a team of DED staff will review the application for completeness. Once the review is complete, the community will be given an opportunity to correct missing or incomplete items.

When the NDED Leadership Community Review team determines that all items are in place and complete, the community will be designated as an NDED Leadership Community.

**Recertification**

Every five years, designated NDED Leadership Communities must submit a recertification application that includes the following:

- An updated community profile and community needs assessment
- Reevaluation/update of strategic plan
- Evaluation of comprehensive plan and capital improvement plan
- Long-range funding plan
SECTION ONE-COMMUNITY

1. Local Government Support
   a. Letter from applicant municipal government identifying local contact person for this program.
   b. Resolutions of support from applicant community.
      (See sample resolution at end of this application.)
   c. Letters of support from any regional economic development entities such as multi-county agencies or districts.

2. Describe collaborative relationships with local organizations.
   a. chamber of commerce
   b. convention and visitor’s bureau (CVB)
   c. housing organizations or developers
   d. LB840 committee
   e. downtown organization or redevelopment authority
   f. other entities.

3. Describe level of volunteerism within your community.
   a. How does your community recruit volunteers?
   b. What types of volunteer opportunities are available?
   c. How does your community show appreciation to its volunteers?

SECTION TWO-STRATEGIC PLANNING

COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

1. Describe the process and tools used to conduct the community assessment.
2. Describe the involvement of stakeholders and the community at large.
3. Describe the results found from the assessment process.
4. Specifically address findings in the following areas:
   a. Communications
      i. cell phone coverage
      ii. broadband capabilities
   b. Health Care
   c. Housing
   d. Education
   e. Employment
   f. Recreation/Tourism
5. Attach a copy of any reports developed as a result of the community assessment.

COMMUNITY PROFILE

1. How was the community profile developed?
2. Provide the link for your online community profile.
3. What is your plan for ensuring that the profile remains up-to-date?
STRATEGIC PLAN (3-5 Years)
1. Provide a one page summary of a community strategic plan, including the process used for its development. An economic development strategic plan must be encompassed within the overall community strategic plan. The strategic plan must be current or reviewed within the past 12 months. Include strategic issues and goals and objectives identified to address these issues, as well as action steps for implementation.
2. Did the strategic plan address the above issues (communications; health care; housing; education; employment; recreation)? Discuss these issues and the goals and objectives identified to meet challenges in these areas.
3. Please attach the community strategic plan or provide a link to an online version.

SECTION THREE-COMMUNITY PLANNING AND ZONING

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
1. Provide a one page summary of the community’s comprehensive plan, including the process used for its development.
2. Please attach a copy of the comprehensive plan or provide a link to an online version.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN
1. Please attach a copy of the capital improvement plan or provide a link to an online version.

ZONING AND SUBDIVISION ORDINANCES
1. Please attach a copy of zoning and subdivision ordinances.

BUILDING CODES
1. Are housing codes in place?
2. Are nuisance ordinances in place?
3. Please attach a copy of any building codes, housing codes, and nuisance ordinances or provide a link to online versions.

CODE ENFORCEMENT
1. Who is responsible for code enforcement?
2. How often are inspections done?
3. How many violations have there been in the past 24 months?

BUILDING PERMITS
1. Describe the process for issuing building permits in your community.

SECTION FOUR-BUSINESS AND TECHNOLOGY

BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION PROGRAM
1. Provide a summary of the BR&E program, including:
a. How many businesses/industries are visited with annually?
b. How are visits conducted and who is involved?
c. What is done with data collected?
d. How is follow-up initiated and tracked?
e. Provide an explanation of the recognition program for local businesses/industries
WEB PRESENCE
Must include presence on: LOIS and local website
1. Provide links for LOIS and the community’s local website. LOIS information must be complete and accurate.
2. Who is responsible for updating the community’s web presence?
3. Community website must include:
   a. Identification
      1. Name of community
      2. Name of STATE – Nebraska clearly shown
      3. Map showing location of community within Nebraska (preferred)
      4. Location identification should be found on EVERY page (e.g., on secondary pages).
      5. Action photos showcasing your community
      6. All links must be working links.
   b. Contact Information
      1. Full/complete information (physical address, telephone with area code, email)
      2. Found clearly on home page and in the footer/header/sidebar of EVERY page on site
      3. 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.
      4. 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
      1. Should be intuitively easy to follow
      2. Easy to identify where at all times within the site
      3. Provides way back home without having to use “back” button
   d. Community Information
      1. Employment opportunities
      2. Housing
      3. Utilities
      4. Businesses
      5. Restaurants
      6. Local attractions/recreation
      7. Local groups/volunteer opportunities
      8. Local events information

SECTION FIVE-IMPLEMENTATION

LOCAL FINANCING AND BUSINESS ASSISTANCE
1. Local Financing and Incentives
   • Submit a summary of local or regional financing and incentive options. This should include financing options for ALL parts of the strategic plan and comprehensive plan.
(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, bonding, special assessment, etc.

2. Business and Entrepreneurial Assistance
   • Submit a summary of local or regional business assistance programs, including technical support, management support, and entrepreneurial support.

Name of Applicant Community

Signature of Applicant Community
   Chief Elected Official

Date

Name of Application Coordinator

Signature and Title of Application Coordinator

Date
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 Nebraska Department of Economic Development’s Leadership Community
Certification has been reviewed and found to be a program promoting our community’s
economic development preparedness;

THEREFORE, the village board or city council of ______________ do herewith pledge their
full support, endorsement, and cooperation for participation in the Nebraska Department of
Economic Development’s Leadership Community Certification by

________________________
(name of applicant village or city)

Approved this ___ day of __________, 20___

Signed ______________________________

Title ________________________________