



## Nebraska Economic Development Certified Community (EDCC) Program Recertification Application

The Nebraska Economic Development Certified Community (EDCC) program is sponsored by the Nebraska Diplomats and administered by staff at the Nebraska Department of Economic Development.

The designation of EDCC is reserved for those communities that initially document economic development readiness. Each applicant community is initially evaluated on program standards related to:

- Organization
- Identified Targets and/or Markets
- Community Infrastructure
- Local Financing and Business Assistance
- Controlled Site or Building

Recertification in the EDCC program requires an equally serious commitment from the applicant community. Recertification is approved when communities meet the same specific critical standards documented during the last five years since earning the initial certification.

Six months prior to an EDCC expiration date, a community will receive written notification from the Department of Economic Development indicating the date that a recertification application is due.

### Directions:

The EDCC Recertification Application must be submitted as a PDF via e-mail to Ashley Rice-Gerlach at [ashley.gerlach@nebraska.gov](mailto:ashley.gerlach@nebraska.gov).

EDCC Recertification applications are treated as official “Request for Proposals” from the Department meaning a community must thoroughly answer all questions, number all pages, and identify within the document (easily viewable) the date it is being submitted to the Department.

An EDCC Recertification application must include a thumbnailed (i.e. clickable) “Table of Contents”. All attachments should be part of the PDF and identified in the “Table of Contents.”

The applications are reviewed and evaluated by a committee of economic development professionals outside the Department. Each applicant community will receive a letter from the Department approximately four weeks from the application submission date, notifying them of the status and/or indicating any necessary items that need to be addressed to maintain certification. Each community will also receive a summary of the review committee’s comments highlighting the strengths of the application, along with areas that should be improved upon. The community is encouraged to use the review committee’s feedback to strengthen and improve their community and economic development initiatives.

Any questions can be directed to Ashley Rice-Gerlach at 308-655-0919 or [ashley.gerlach@nebraska.gov](mailto:ashley.gerlach@nebraska.gov)

## **EDCC Recertification Application Requirements**

### **Part I. - Letter from Applicant Municipality**

Provide a letter from the applicant's municipal government identifying the lead economic development agency and local contact person for the EDCC Recertification application.

### **Part II. - Website**

The community or lead economic development agency must have a working and updated website focused on the community's economic development efforts.

The review committee will ensure the applicable website includes:

- A. Identification
  1. Name of community or organization.
  2. Name of STATE – Nebraska clearly shown.
  3. Map showing location of community within Nebraska.
  4. Location identification found on every page.
  5. Action photos showcasing the community.
  
- B. Contact Information
  1. Full/complete information (physical address, telephone with area code, email address).
  2. Contact information found clearly on home page and in the footer/header/sidebar of every page of the site.
  3. Emails should be “hot” or working, and spelled out – not somebody’s name underlined, or a sentence saying “email us.”
  4. If the page features a “Contact Us” button or tab – it should open up another page on the website with the same look and feel and should contain contact information. This should NEVER be a link that automatically opens as an email.
  
- C. Navigation
  1. Should be easy to follow and identify where one is at all times within the site.
  2. Provides a way back home without having to use the “back” button.
  
- D. Economic Development Page
  1. If providing a link to the community's or economic development organization's website, a page or tab must be dedicated to the economic development efforts.
  
- E. Online Properties
  1. Website must have Location One Information System integrated or linked so all available sites and buildings are accessible to the viewer.

Provide a working link to the community's or lead economic development agency's website.

### **Part III. - Location One Information System (LOIS) Information**

The community must have LOIS fully integrated or linked into the community's or lead economic development agency's website. In LOIS the applicant must have all Community Information, Available Buildings, and Available Sites fully populated with current information (i.e. all printable flyer fields and

advanced search fields must be completed, and at least one photo for the community, each available building, and each available site must be provided).

From the provided link the review committee will verify that all Community Information, Available Buildings, and Available Sites in LOIS are fully populated with current information.

#### **Part IV. - Controlled Site or Building Information**

A community must have an available site (approximately 20 acres or more), or available building (approximately 20,000 square feet or more) developed, or in the process of being developed to maintain EDCC certification. The site or building must be controlled in the form of ownership, an option, or a right-of-first refusal. The building or site must be listed in LOIS and fully populated (i.e. all printable flyer fields and advanced search fields completed, and at least one photo of the site or building provided).

##### Existing Building (if used for the purpose of this application)

- Submit (as an attachment) documentation of price-control for the building (could be a letter of agreement with the owner, or documentation of ownership).
- Submit LOIS link to **fully populated** building page.
- Identify what target industries have been identified for the building.
- Complete Attachment A regarding “Utilities” as they relate to the building.
- Complete Attachment B regarding “Transportation” as it relates to the building.

##### Site Development (if used for the purpose of this application)

- Submit (as an attachment) documentation of price-control for the site (could be a letter of agreement with the owner, documentation of ownership, an option, or right-of first refusal).
- Submit LOIS link to **fully populated** site page.
- Identify what target industries have been identified for the site.
- Complete Attachment C regarding “Utilities” as they relate to the site.
- Complete Attachment D regarding “Transportation” as it relates to the site.
- Identify if a Phase I Environmental Assessment or DEQ Section 128(a) Phase I Environmental Site Assessment has been completed on the site. Provide the date in which the assessment was completed along with a description of the findings. Submit (as an attachment or link to) a copy of the Phase I environmental assessment or DEQ Section 128(a) Phase I Environmental Site Assessment.

#### **Part V. - Community’s Identified Targets or Markets**

Identify the community’s existing industry sector(s) and geographic focuses, as well as the community’s targeted markets for business recruitment activities. Describe how the target industries or market segments for the community were determined and provide an overview of the marketing plan to address identified targets (i.e. trade shows, cold calls, etc.).

#### **Part VI. - Business Retention & Expansion Program**

EDCC communities are required to complete business visits annually. Refer to the table below for a guideline on the number of visits a community is required to conduct annually to meet the EDCC program requirements.

<u>Population:</u>	<u>Guideline for BR&amp;E Visits Conducted Annually:</u>
Less than 5,000	15 Interviews
5,000 – 10,000	25 Interviews
Greater than 10,000	35 Interviews

Provide detailed information on the community’s annual Business Retention & Expansion (BR&E) program. Include:

- How businesses are identified/targeted for visits?
- What industries are included in the visits?
- How visits are conducted and who is involved?
- How the community uses the information collected from each visit?
- How visit follow-up is initiated and tracked?
- An explanation of any recognition program for local industries/business.

In addition, provide a listing of BR&E visits that have been conducted in the last 12 months.

**Part VII. - Community Strategic Plan for Economic Development**

Within the last five-years the applicant community or lead economic development agency must have participated in a long-range strategic planning process involving their economic development efforts. This strategic planning process should include:

- Assessment of the community’s assets and liabilities.
- Identification of key local issues.
- An outline of goals and objectives (objectives should describe key results to be achieved, measures of progress, and target dates for achievement).
- Development of strategic actions that will accomplish the community’s economic development goals and objectives.
- An implementation plan that includes organizational responsibilities, resource allocation (how will the community fund the strategy), and a one-year work program (annual action plan).
- Evaluation methods that enables the community or organization to determine if it is achieving expected results. The plan should be flexible enough to allow for emerging opportunities.

Attach or provide a link to the community’s most recent strategic plan for economic development.

**Part VIII. - Marketing Materials**

Attach a copy or link to the community’s marketing materials used for economic development and business recruitment efforts. Marketing materials may include printed materials, websites, videos, etc.

**Part IX. - Long-Range Funding Plan**

The community should have a long-range funding plan (minimally for the next fiscal year) for the community’s economic development efforts or economic development agency. The funding plan should include the cost for staff, benefits, travel, contracted service providers, and volunteers involved in the economic development efforts. Also other organizational needs should be identified, including adequate staffing, equipment, and resources to operate an efficient and productive economic development business.

Additionally, the funding plan should include necessary capital reserves to respond to immediate business opportunities, and funding sources for any ongoing operation of the economic development group.

Attach or provide a link to the community's Long-Range Funding Plan for economic development. The plan should be in the form of a balanced budget.

**Part X. - Labor Market Information and Workforce Attraction Efforts**

The community must maintain current labor market information from a survey or compiled report. Labor market information should support the community's targeted marketing efforts and be no older than three years.

The Nebraska Department of Labor, a utility provider, or a contracted agency, are useful resources in compiling labor market information for a community.

Attach a copy of the community's most recent labor market information.

In addition, describe the community's efforts and initiatives to address labor market and available workforce issues. Include information regarding partnerships formed with businesses, community colleges and schools within the community and region to develop strategies for providing skilled labor and resources to train the community's workforce.

**Part XI. – Housing Initiatives**

The community should maintain a current assessment of their existing housing conditions (within the last five years). The assessment should include the existing housing conditions within the community, along with the goals and initiatives to addressing the community's housing concerns. Please attach or provide a link to the community's most recent housing conditions assessment.

Please include a summary identifying the community's existing housing conditions, along with the goals and initiatives the community is undertaking to address their challenges. In addition, please include a summary of housing projects and initiatives completed in the community over the last five (5) years (i.e. new single and multi-family housing construction, owner and rental housing rehabilitation, demolition activity, new subdivision development, etc.)

**Part XII. - Nebraska Diplomats**

Identify the first and last name of each Nebraska Diplomat located in the applicant community, along with the business they own or work for. In addition, identify how each Nebraska Diplomat participates in the local community's economic development efforts.

EDCC communities must engage their local business leaders and owners in the Nebraska Diplomat's program. Refer to the table below for a guideline on the number of Nebraska Diplomat's representing the local community to meet the EDCC program requirements.

<u>Population:</u>	<u>Guideline for Number of Nebraska Diplomat's per Community:</u>
Less than 5,000	1
5,000 – 10,000	3
Greater than 10,000	5

**Part XIII. - Economic Development Evaluation**

- A. Provide a written evaluation of the community’s economic development accomplishments during the past five years, including:
- a. Business recruitment and expansion projects completed, community development projects completed, awards received, etc.
  - b. Programs utilized within the community (local, state or Federal programs) to improve infrastructure (housing, utilities, roads, etc.) that support the business climate. Provide details and specific examples of how these programs have impacted the community and assisted businesses.
  - c. Collaborative efforts with local, regional and state economic development organizations and provide examples of positive outcomes resulting from these efforts.

B. Complete the following table for the previous five years:

New Primary Businesses Located in the Community (refer to Nebraska Advantage eligible businesses for listing of primary companies).	Identify Businesses:
Direct New Jobs Created from New Primary Businesses Located in the Community.	Identify Number of Jobs:
New Capital Investment from the New Primary Business Located in the Community.	Identify New Capital Investment:
New Non-Primary Businesses Located In the Community (i.e. service and retail).	Identify Businesses:
Direct New Jobs Created from New Non-Primary Businesses Located in the Community.	Identify Number of Jobs:
New Capital Investment Created from the New Non-Primary Businesses Located in the Community.	Identify New Capital Investment:
Business Expansion Projects Located in the Community.	Identify Businesses:
Direct New Jobs Created from Business Expansion Projects Located in the Community.	Identify Number of Jobs:
Estimated Jobs Retained From Community’s Economic Development Efforts.	Identify Number of Jobs:
Businesses Closed.	Identify Businesses:
Direct Jobs Lost Due to Business Closures.	Identify Number of Jobs:
Industrial Sites Developed.	Identify Industrial Sites:
Volunteers Working on Economic Development for the Community.	Identify Number of Volunteers: