



August 2017

Imperial Earns Certification as an EDCC

AUGUST 10, 2017 (LINCOLN, NEB.)— Lt. Gov. Mike Foley stressed the importance of local leadership and innovation within Imperial’s business community today, where he honored leaders for the city’s ongoing success in economic development. For the second time in five years, the Nebraska Diplomats and the Department of Economic Development (DED) have recognized the City of Imperial (pop. 2,122) for earning certification as an Economic Development Certified Community (EDCC). DED Business Development Consultant Brittany Hardin joined the Lt. Governor to recognize city leaders and supporters during a community coffee on Thursday morning.

Imperial is one of 39 communities to earn EDCC certification in the program, sponsored by the Nebraska Diplomats and administered by the DED. State officials established the program in 2005 to recognize communities for preparedness to attract new industries and grow existing businesses. The community earned original certification in June 2012 and earned recertification in July 2017.

As part of the certification process, a qualifying community must identify a well-defined program that actively engages with its existing business community and offers a supportive environment for welcoming new economic development projects. This includes documenting available sites and buildings, local financing and incentive programs, and a strategic plan for economic development, such as implementing a progressive strategy to grow the community’s labor market.

“The EDCC program recognizes Nebraska communities that set an example for growth, and outstanding leadership in Imperial has built the city’s reputation as an innovative area for economic development,” said Lt. Gov. Foley. “Over the past five years, the city has opened 25 new businesses and created 72 additional jobs. Since Imperial’s original EDCC recognition, these community additions contributed to \$2,250,000 in new capital investment in the community.”

In addition, community leaders encouraged and assisted in the expansion of eight existing businesses in Imperial. Since 2012, these expansions created an additional 10 jobs and a net increase of \$7,238,000 in capital investment.

Community leaders worked closely with a local housing developer to build more than 20 new homes in the Cornerstone Development Property. In addition, private developers constructed 10 more homes in other areas of the city. Over the past five years, housing availability has increased in Imperial by four percent. Since 2013, 25 homes were successfully completed; this year, the community has issued seven additional permits for new housing construction. Two new buildings are currently under construction at Cornerstone Development Park, made possible in part through the city's LB840 program.

For more on this story,

<https://opportunity.nebraska.gov/lt-gov-foley-honors-imperial-for-success-in-housing-business-recruitment/>



Nebraska Unemployment Rate Milestone

The Nebraska workforce continues to prove its stability by hitting an unemployment rate of 2.8 percent in July of 2017. This is the lowest unemployment rate Nebraska has seen since August of 2000. This places Nebraska within the top five lowest unemployment rates across the nation.

“This major jobs milestone is another great example of how Nebraska is growing,” said Governor Ricketts. “This year, we’ve already seen over \$1 billion of new investment from great job creators like Costco, Facebook, Cargill, and others. My team continues to develop new strategies to grow new opportunities to keep Nebraska the best place in the world

to live, work, and raise a family.” The state of Nebraska withstands to experience increased growth with the continued interest in the Silicon Prairie and the lower costs of living. For more information,

<https://opportunity.nebraska.gov/gov-ricketts-highlights-unemployment-rate-milestone/> or <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/laus.nr0.htm>

Keys to a Successful Social Media Plan

Having an online presence in the form of social media is an essential key to marketing your business in today's society. It not only allows you to reach a wide range of clientele, but also gives you the perfect opportunity to offer promotional items that will increase store traffic and circulation.

Taking the time to lay out your social media strategy gives you additional exposure all while developing a brand image that people will grow to know and easily recognize as your business. One of the most successful ways to market through social media is to strategically post information about your



business and not overwhelm your followers. Make sure the information you are putting out there provides them with value. By actively engaging your clients with valuable rewards for their loyalty, you create additional buzz and continue to gain online traction.

For more information on social media strategies,

<https://www.score.org/resource/8-essentials-successful-social-media-plan>



#whatshappeningWCNDD

What are you doing this year? Send us your pictures to mburke@west-central-nebraska.com with the hashtag #whatshappeningWCNDD and we will share them on our Facebook page. Meanwhile, see if you can guess where this is ...

Outdoor Recreation Funding Available

The Land Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) stateside assistance grant program has provided funding for community outdoor recreation projects across Nebraska for nearly 40 years. Eligible applicants may include a city, village, county, natural resource district or other political subdivision. Examples of eligible projects include: playgrounds, picnic facilities, trails, ballfields, soccer fields, shelter houses, tennis courts, multi-purpose courts and modest related support facilities. Acquisition of land for a new park or for land that is adjacent to an existing park is eligible for Fund assistance. Land to be donated by a private individual or a corporation after federal project approval is also eligible for Fund assistance. Professional consultant services to prepare the application or provide cost estimates are eligible for Fund assistance.

All proposed projects must meet priority outdoor recreation needs as identified in the current Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP): A Guide to an Active Nebraska (2016 – 2020) to be eligible for grant assistance. Priorities can be found in Chapter Six: Action Plan for Nebraska.

The LWCF is a reimbursable grant, meaning the project sponsor must finance 100 percent of project costs as they are incurred. The sponsor may then request reimbursement for half of all eligible expenses up to the amount of the approved grant. To be eligible for reimbursement, all costs must be incurred and paid by the project sponsor during the project period as identified on the grant agreement. Project sponsors may not take title to land or begin development until after the project is approved by the National Park Service.

Expenses for planning and engineering which are necessary to prepare the proposal for submission are eligible project costs if they are documented as pre-agreement costs in the application. These are the only eligible pre-agreement costs. If any other work is performed or title to land is accepted prior to federal approval of the project, the expenses incurred are ineligible for reimbursement or match.

If this is of interest to your community, contact CJ Poltack today to discuss potential projects your community may have in mind. In order to be eligible, your City Council/Village Board will be required to pass a resolution at a public meeting to participate in the LWCF program, complete an application form by October 13, 2017, and supply all requested supplemental information as required by staff.

http://outdoornebraska.gov/wp-content/uploads/formidable/LWCF-Application-FY2017_Fillable.pdf

Important Deadlines:

Land and Water Conservation Fund Application

October 13, 2017

CDBG Water & Waste Water

Open Cycle

2018 Nebraska Passport Application

December 2017