

FALLS CITY NEBRASKA

Strategically Positioned. Building for the Future.

Our mission is to encourage economic development and growth and improve the business conditions of the Falls City area.



edge

FALLS CITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & GROWTH ENTERPRISE VOLUME II ■ 2009

Bridge to Brighter Future ... New Rulo Bridge Approved



The Nebraska Highway Commission unanimously approved the construction of a new highway bridge over the Missouri River at Rulo. Construction of the new \$32 million bridge is scheduled to begin in 2011 and be completed by 2014. The costs will be shared by Nebraska and Missouri.

EDGE Board Members Charlie Radatz and Beth Sichel co-chaired the Tri-State Corridor Alliance, a grassroots group that has worked since November 2007 to make the bridge a reality. Over 1,600 letters of support from individuals and businesses and many resolutions of support were generated. Members of the group also made trips to Washington, D.C. and Lincoln to lobby for the project.

“The new bridge will provide immeasurable economic impact for the tri-state region, including Southeast Nebraska, Northwest Missouri and Northeast Kansas.”

Rod Vandenberg
NE District 1 Highway Commissioner
and Falls City Mayor

“We are absolutely amazed that we were able to accomplish so much in so little time,” said Sichel, who gave her co-chair much of the credit. “Charlie’s leadership and hard work were key to our success,” said Sichel. She also credited Mitch Glaeser, owner of the Stephenson Hotel, for his work on the project and State Senator Lavon Heidemann for his role in securing funding for the project.

“This is a bridge to new opportunities and a brighter future for the tri-state region,” said Sichel. “The new transportation corridor will attract industry and jobs and also boost tourism by providing easier access to interstates and other major highways in the three states.”

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EDGE's Product Development and Public Policy priorities are focused on many of the top ranked site selection priorities identified in *Area Development's* 23rd Annual Corporate Survey.

- EDGE realizes the importance of enhancing the area's accessibility to major transportation corridors. In addition to the Rulo Bridge, EDGE officials are advocating for improvements to Highways 73 and 159. Also on the public policy agenda is funding for the Falls City Airport Road.
- Sites and buildings are another key priority. Progress has made on acquiring land to expand the Falls City Industrial Park and discussions are continuing with federal officials on use of HUD-EDI funding awarded in 2003 to achieve industrial site and building development goals.
- Workforce Development services are extremely important to the community. EDGE, in cooperation with Senator Heidemann, worked diligently to secure the delivery of services locally resulting in Falls City being chosen as a pilot community for delivery of itinerate services. EDGE is also continuing to work with area education providers to provide workforce development and training programs.
- EDGE is working on enhancing local incentives, including supporting the use of TIF.
- EDGE has applied for grants to advance local housing initiatives designed to meet the needs of a growing employment base.
- Over the past five years, the City, County and private businesses and individuals have worked together to enhance the quality of life in Falls City. New developments include an aquatic center, public library and arts center, high school track and field stadium and upgrades to area parks. A new state-of-the art hospital is scheduled to open later this year.

"Falls City is becoming an even more attractive place to do business, work, live and play," said Beth Sickel, Vice President of EDGE's Product Development and Public Policy Team.

Area Development magazine's annual corporate survey provides insights into corporate decision-makers' site selection priorities.



Combined Ratings* of 2008 Factors		Corporate Survey 2008	
Site selection factors		2008	2007
Ranking			
1.	Highway accessibility	95.4	96.9 (1)**
2.	Labor costs	91.4	92.3 (2)
3.	Occupancy and construction costs	90.4	88.2 (5)
4.	Tax exemptions	88.6	82.8 (10T)
5.	Energy availability and costs	87.9	89.0 (3)
6.	Availability of skilled labor	87.7	88.7 (4)
7.	State and local incentives	87.2	83.4 (8)
8.	Corporate tax rate	85.3	83.8 (7)
9.	Low union profile	82.7	80.6 (13)
10.	Available land	82.0	85.4 (6)
11.	Availability of buildings	80.8	79.3 (14)
12.	Proximity to major markets	78.7	82.8 (10T)
13.	Right-to-work state	76.6	72.1 (15)
14.	Environmental regulations	76.1	83.2 (9)
15.	Expedited or "fast-track" permitting	72.5	71.5 (17)
16.	Proximity to suppliers	69.2	71.8 (16)
17.	Availability of long-term financing	64.2	63.0 (19)
18.	Availability of unskilled labor	62.9	65.2 (18)
19.	Training programs	62.3	56.6 (21)
20.	Raw materials availability	56.8	62.5 (20)
21.	Availability of advanced ICT services	55.5	82.2 (12)
22.	Accessibility to major airport	53.3	54.4 (22)
23.	Proximity to technical university	38.4	32.7 (24)
24.	Railroad service	27.2	38.1 (23)
25.	Waterway or oceanport accessibility	15.7	15.2 (25)
Quality-of-life factors			
Ranking			
1.	Low crime rate	78.2	74.0 (1)
2.	Healthcare facilities	77.6	57.4 (5)
3.	Housing costs	67.1	58.8 (4)
4.	Housing availability	66.2	62.1 (3)
5.	Ratings of public schools	65.7	62.6 (2)
6.	Climate	56.0	51.6 (6)
7.	Colleges and universities in area	55.3	47.3 (8)
8.	Recreational opportunities	48.6	43.4 (9)
9.	Cultural opportunities	46.4	48.7 (7)

*All figures are percentages and are the total of "very important" and "important" ratings of the *Area Development* Corporate Survey and are rounded to the nearest tenth of a percent.
** (2007 ranking)

*The findings of the 23rd Annual Corporate Survey and the 4th Annual Consultants Survey are reported in the December 2008/January 2009 issue of *Area Development Magazine* and are available online at www.areadevelopment.com.*

Aggressive Target Marketing Efforts Underway



To build awareness of the Falls City area's business location advantages and generate prospect leads, EDGE is aggressively implementing an ongoing, comprehensive target marketing action plan.

"Our number one priority is to work with our existing businesses to insure they receive the assistance and resources they need to grow and be successful in our community," said Steve Kottich, EDGE Vice President of Marketing & Sales. "We have completed calls on all of our major employers and have plans to visit the headquarters of WASP and Vantec in late April. Working with our existing businesses, we also hope to identify new business location leads/prospects, including buyer-supplier linkages."

"A series of quarterly direct marketing campaigns will be implemented this year to reach new business prospects," according to Kottich. "Businesses within 100-miles of Richardson County/Falls City in Missouri, Kansas and Iowa will be targeted. In the upcoming quarter, we will make contact with over 200 target businesses in this first-ever *Sell Falls City* campaign. Direct mail will include a personalized sales letter and sales piece (shown below). Follow-up phone calls will be made to determine interest and schedule appointments with qualified prospects."

"Beckie Cromer, EDGE Executive Director, is also working in collaboration with our regional partners, including the [Lincoln Area Development Partners](#) to market the region to business prospects nationally," said Kottich.

EDGE is asking its member investors as well as others in the community for help in generating new business prospects leads. "We encourage everyone to help us market and sell Falls City as a great place to do business and work," said Kottich. "You could refer individuals to the EDGE website for information or contact the EDGE office for marketing materials to mail ... or if you prefer our Executive Director Beckie Cromer could make the contact. You can be assured EDGE will handle all referrals professionally and confidentially."

Position Your Company for GROWTH

Consider the Location Advantages of **FALLS CITY, NEBRASKA**

- Strategic central U.S. location and direct access to major interstate, railroad and express-trail route travel ways.
- Access to transportation resources: highways and air services.
- Excellent utilities and employment base, including manufacturing, healthcare, education and government.
- Advanced workforce and high-tech workforce.
- Progressive, pro-business climate. Performance incentives for and financial incentives available.
- Competitive operating environment, multiple incentives available and special services for new and growing business.
- Available sites and buildings, complete turnkey.
- Quality of living advantages in schools and facilities. Major new residential and commercial developments and new hotels, resorts, theater, train and rail centers and more.

Available Sites and Buildings

- Three industrial sites available in Falls City. Industrial Park, located less than one mile from Highway 78 and adjacent to I-80 and I-70. Features excellent, fully equipped utilities in 2000 sq. ft. of space, auto access and telecommunications services. Current occupants include General, Link Truck, Vantec, Harsco, Vantage through Support Products (VSP), and Falls City's newest hospital at location 2000 sq. ft. of office space.
- 27,700 sq. ft. building located in industrial park available for immediate occupancy. Features 18,200 sq. ft. of manufacturing space with 22 ft. ceilings, 17 drive-in bays and 2,500 sq. ft. of office space.
- 52,770 sq. ft. former hospital and medical clinic building. Excellent location for health care-related and medical center operations. Space can be subdivided.
- The area features excellent available, including assistance to acquire and renovate existing buildings for most specialized applications.

State of Nebraska Business and Tax Advantages

- Ranked 20th in the nation out of 50 states for business 2009.
- State tax benefits:
 - Substantial formula used to calculate corporate income tax liability.
 - 100% property tax.
 - No inventory tax.
 - No personal property tax on machinery.
 - No sales tax on raw materials when used as ingredients in component parts in manufacturing operations.
 - No sales tax on sales of energy or water for processing or manufacturing purposes.
 - No sales tax on manufacturing machinery, equipment and related services.
 - State and local tax refunds available on qualified and new-type production control equipment.
 - State and local tax refunds available on property qualifying for certain investment incentives.
- Nebraska Advantage Economic Development incentives provide an array of financing, advantages, custom job training assistance and business assistance to new and expanding businesses.

NEBRASKA Advantage

Contact Us

Beckie Cromer, Executive Director
Falls City Economic Development and Growth Enterprise, Inc. 10000
P.O. Box 574, Falls City, NE 68330
Phone: 402-298-2229 Fax: 402-298-2288
Email: beccie@falls-cityedge.com
Web: www.falls-cityedge.com

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EDGE's new sales piece developed for direct marketing campaigns promotes Falls City area location advantages. To obtain a copy, contact the [EDGE Office](#).

Certified Economic Development Community Application Submitted



EDGE submitted the application for Falls City to become a [Nebraska Certified Economic Development Community](#) to the Nebraska Department of Economic Development last month.

“We hope to hear soon from the DED,” said EDGE Executive Director Beckie Cromer. “Once we obtain certification, it will better position Falls City for economic development opportunities, show our community is ‘economic development ready’ and exemplify Falls City as capable of marketing itself for business and industry development.

EDGE Voices Support for Cooper Nuclear Power Plant License Renewal

EDGE Executive Director Beckie Cromer spoke at the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission hearing on February 26 in Brownville. Cromer expressed EDGE’s unwavering support for the Cooper Nuclear Station’s license renewal for another 20 years.



In her comments before the Commission she said, “The Cooper Nuclear Station is an economic development gem that injects millions of dollars into our local economy by producing almost 800 jobs that pay more than double the Nebraska state average. The decommissioning of the Cooper Nuclear Power Station would result in loss of revenue and jobs in southeast Nebraska. Additionally, Cooper runs a very safe operation that allows Nebraska to offer a diverse portfolio of power to our citizens.”

EDGE recently organized a tour of the Cooper Nuclear Station for member investors. "The tour was very informative and provided a better understanding of the day-to-day operations at the station," said Cromer. "The facility was top notch, the staff was professional and knowledgeable and the safety measures in place for workers and the surrounding public exceeds benchmarks set by governmental agencies."

The Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD) - which operates the Cooper Nuclear Station - has applied for a 20-year extension of Cooper’s license. The original 40-year operating license expires in 2014. [Read NPPD's press release on submission of the license renewal application >>](#)

City Renews Commitment to EDGE

On March 2 the City of Falls City renewed its commitment and financial investment in EDGE. According to the new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), the City will invest 2% of the gross gas and electric revenues not to exceed \$120,000 in 2009, \$122,500 in 2010 and \$125,000 in 2011. EDGE will provide a broad range of economic development services as articulated in the MOU scope of services.

“We would like to extend a special thanks to Mayor Vandenberg and the City Council for their continued support both financially and in time given through board representation,” said EDGE President Kevin Malone. “EDGE is committed to encouraging economic growth and improving the business conditions of greater Falls City. Working together as a public-private team, we hope to meet the goals set-forth in our strategic plan and use collaborative approaches to building a stronger, prosperous economy and growing job market.” Falls City Mayor Rodney Vandenberg, Councilman Brad Campbell and City Clerk/Treasurer Gary Jorn serve on the EDGE Board of Directors.

Richardson County renewed its annual commitment of \$25,000 in September of last year. In addition to public investments, approximately \$90,000 per annum has been committed from private investors.

[Go to EDGE website to view complete list of EDGE private and public investors >>](#)

[Member investors log-in to view City and County MOUs >>](#)

New Investor Relations Section of Website Launched

A new [Investor Relations Section](#) of the EDGE website was recently launched. The new web pages are dedicated to providing investors and community stakeholders with information on EDGE’s program of work and accomplishments as well as how businesses and individuals can get involved in the organization. The section also includes lists of the board of directors and member investors and EDGE’s public policy statements. Member investors can also *log-in* to the password-protected area for member news and updates and corporate documents.

“With our new Member Investors Relations web pages, we are excited to provide our investors and stakeholders with easily accessible and up-to-date information about EDGE on an ongoing basis,” said Bart Keller, EDGE Vice President of Investor and Community Relations.

Visit the EDGE Website
www.fallscityedge.com



EDGE *Lunch & Learn* Features Update on New Hospital

The first quarter EDGE *Lunch & Learn* was held February 17. Over 45 people attended to hear a progress report on construction of the new hospital facility from [Community Medical Center](#) Administrator Ryan Larsen. Larsen told the group that the fundraising goal had been met and exceeded the \$1.5 million goal. He expressed the hospital’s appreciation for the community stepping forward to make the project happen.

“We are still on schedule and on budget,” said Ryan. “We expect to open the new facility for patients in December 2009.”

Look for information on next quarter’s *Lunch & Learn* to be announced soon.



EDGE EMPLOYER SPOTLIGHT



Stripes & Signs was the focus of EDGE's first quarter Employer Spotlight. To recognize this successful, innovative small business, EDGE sponsored an Open House on March 18. EDGE also featured the employer in an advertorial placed in the Falls City Journal. Read the following excerpt from the advertorial to learn more about *Stripes & Sign*:

If you are a Tiger fan, an Irish fan, a sponsor of a community activity, a business owner, or just an average citizen of the Falls City area, you have probably had close, personal contact with a product created by the business, *Stripes and Signs*. Leland Harmon's business is located at 1921 Harlan Street and has created countless printed t-shirts, jackets, sweatshirts, uniforms, and other garments worn by sports teams, fans, and the general population of this part of southeast Nebraska. But that is not the full extent of the services provided by this business and its owner to our community as well as surrounding communities.

Business owner/operator, Leland Harmon, has made a career of not only designing and printing articles of clothing, but also of designing signs, screen printing garments, embroidering items and printing banners. Added to these services are Harmon's skills at repairing car and truck windshields and designing and applying graphic designs to vehicles.

Harmon opened this Falls City business in 1989, selecting what he terms a simple name for his first small shop on Stone Street: *Stripes & Signs*. The business moved to one other location before Harmon relocated the shop in 1991 to its current location on Harlan Street.

Many area businesses try to do their fair share to meet various community needs as well as the financial needs of the business. *Stripes and Signs* is definitely doing a great deal to support different groups and their fundraising endeavors. Last year, Harmon was involved

in a project to raise funds for the Humane Society. The project involved making t-shirts for a \$10 donation. *Stripes and Signs* staff members have also printed t-shirts for Falls City's new Aquatic Center and various After-Prom events for area schools. Harmon personally continues his community involvement as a member of the Jaycee's since 1993, as a member of the First Christian Church, as a member of the Chamber of Commerce, and as a member of EDGE.

Harmon's business growth and expansion plans include making upgrades in the area of digital printing, purchasing more embroidery equipment, and adding the most up-to-date equipment.

Owner/operator of *Stripes and Signs*, Leland Harmon, has made a mark not only in the area of business in Falls City but also in the area of community service.

Full-page advertorial placed in the Falls City Journal was created in collaboration with the Falls City Journal and Falls City and Sacred Heart High Schools journalism teachers and students.



Visit *Stripes & Signs* Online
www.otherneatstuff.com



Message from the EDGE Executive Director

In reviewing the first quarter of 2009, I'm happy to report Falls City EDGE completed or made progress on many strategic goals. A few notable successes include:

- EDGE signed a land agreement to acquire 10.1 acres of industrial ground which will allow us to move forward with industrial site development goals.
- The Southeast Nebraska Partners for Progress, of which EDGE is a member, started development of a five-county regional recruitment website.
- A targeted geographic marketing campaign was launched.
- We have been diligently working with our state representatives on funding for a paved airport road.
- A grant was submitted that will help us develop a comprehensive plan to implement housing and redevelopment efforts.

We were also very busy with many EDGE-sponsored member investor events including the Cooper Nuclear Station tour, a tax increment financing meeting, a *Lunch & Learn* and an *Employer Spotlight* featuring Stripes and Signs which included an advertorial in the *FC Journal* and an open house. We are also planning a mid-year investors event.

So, what can we expect for the rest of 2009? Although we are in a national recession and it is a difficult time in which to market our community, we are going to continue to aggressively market Falls City's location advantages. We will continue to focus on attracting industries, business and workforce development, new resident recruitment and sustaining our strong regional partnerships. We will continue to challenge ourselves to think of new ideas that will help our local area fully realize its development potential. Falls City EDGE will continue our mission to encourage economic growth of the greater Falls City area.

In closing, I am pleased to introduce Cassey Whalen, EDGE's new administrative assistant. Cassey is very excited about the wonderful things EDGE is doing for Falls City and she is looking forward to her new position. You may reach Cassey at cassey@fallscityedge.com. Please join me in welcoming Casey to the EDGE team!

BECKIE CROMER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Falls City Economic Development & Growth Enterprise (EDGE)

3424 North Highway 73, Box 574

Falls City, NE 68355

402.245.2105

info@fallscityedge.com

Beckie Cromer, Executive Director
Cassey Whalen, Administrative Assistant

Visit us online
www.fallscityedge.com

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