

GOVERNOR'S COMMUNITY SPIRIT AWARD NOMINATION

Name of Community: City of Bassett

Population: 636

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Submission Style: Binder _____

Website X

If website submissions, what is the web address? www.bassettnebr.com link: NCIP - 2010

1) Describe the community planning process.

Planning is an important facet to keeping Bassett moving forward. Bassett put together a strategic action plan in 1995. Since this plan was created, the community projects and ideas have centered on the goals listed in our plan. The City may have branched off into other areas as well, but we have always utilized the results of that plan. We have created various committees and organizations to help Bassett succeed allowing significant citizen participation in the planning process.

The Bassett/Rock County Chamber of Commerce was organized after we became a Main Street community to involve all the other entities that had been doing some of the same things. Our Economic Development Committee and Bassett Development Corporation are now under the Chamber. The Chamber of Commerce currently has 45 members including business owners, individuals, and corporations. Monthly meetings are held where all members can attend and discuss different projects to further the development of our community and businesses. One of the projects we are currently working on is purchasing a local billboard and repainting it to attract more business to our downtown area. The Bassett/Rock County Economic Development Committee meets monthly as well, where everyone--business people, ranchers, youth and educators--is welcome to attend to share opinions and ideas for continued economic development.

Along with these organizations, the City Council meetings are always open to the public for people to voice their concerns and opinions. At the beginning of each year, the local Economic Development Coordinator and City Council meet and brainstorm projects that should be put into place or be accomplished that year.

In 2005, Bassett received a planning grant to create a Master Recreation Plan. In 2007, the plan was completed with the vision of a new swimming pool, renovations to the baseball fields, a fishing pond, and a new entrance to the fairgrounds. When the plan was completed, the community knew they did not have the financial means to meet all the "wishes" of the plan, so we are taking it project by project to make the plan come to fruition. New signage is in place at the entrance of the fairgrounds, along with a newly renovated baseball field. Funding for a new swimming pool is being explored.

To help focus our efforts and know what the people of Bassett want to see in our community, in 2007, Bassett Community Development Agency (BCDA) along with CNEDD conducted a community survey to find what people wanted to see happen within our community. A town hall meeting was then held to

go over the results and have a brainstorming session. Out of that meeting came ideas for conducting a planning study for annexation, the need for a leadership program, the need to build our recycling program, the desire to get younger families back to our community and increase youth participation in the community.

Using this information, the City received in 2008 the approval of a \$25,000 planning grant to do an update to the comprehensive plan and zoning regulations, blight study, amend the redevelopment plan and conduct an annexation study for urban areas outside the current city limits. With this planning grant, the city has held various meetings with engineers, focus groups and town hall meetings to get public opinion on the different aspects of the grant.

The community of Bassett has always used the “open door” policy. If someone would like to see a project get started or has an idea for an improvement, they are always welcome to bring their ideas to the City Council or to voice them to the Economic Development Coordinator.

2) Describe the community’s efforts to develop local leadership and volunteerism.

One area that a smaller community may struggle with is getting new volunteers to take part. Bassett is continually trying different activities to involve new people. We have started a welcoming program that includes taking welcome baskets to newcomers. Within that basket is information on how to get involved with our community. We have also held two Business Appreciation Picnics in past springs honoring our local businesses and we invite the newcomers to the picnic to meet people within our community and to learn about opportunities to become involved in Bassett. Last year we had a motivational speaker come and talk about living in a small community and what we can do to make it an even better place to live.

One way that we keep volunteers active is by placing people in areas that they enjoy and want to use their talents. For instance, our NCIP committee reaches out to new people each year to play a part. Last year we added a new member who uses her talents and enjoyment for photography and scrap booking. We added another new member this year who will be working on submitting a project in which she played an integral part in organizing and completing. Also, the chamber is working on implementing an annual Chamber Evening where local businesses, community members and volunteers are recognized for their continued support in projects within Bassett.

Another example of people using their talents is the Sandhills Ranch EXPO. Our community was in danger of losing the event. So, a committee who wanted to see an event like this stay in Bassett was formed and worked hard over the year planning out all the details to hold a successful Sandhills Ranch EXPO. This group of individuals consists of new volunteers and old. Their desire to keep an EXPO event in Bassett motivated them to volunteers hours and hours to hold a successful event.

Bassett is very excited they were able to take part in the NCIP Leadership Development Challenge this past year. One concern that came out of our community survey was the need for youth involvement, so we really wanted to be involved with a leadership program for our youth. The Rock County Youth Leadership Class was a huge success and the youth that were involved are really starting to show initiative in being involved in the community.

Many of the organizations’ meetings are listed on our website. People know they are open to the public. We also promote projects as well as people getting involved with them in our local newspaper, radio station and cable station.

3) How does your community identify community organizations and their roles?

The City of Bassett has a web site that has a wealth of helpful information listed. On the web site, organizations are listed along with contact information. When an individual has questions or concerns about an organization, they will know where they should call or email. The economic development coordinator works at keeping the Bassett web site up to date, so that it can be a valuable resource for people.

Many of the committees work together on projects. For example, this year the Rock County Fair Board decided they just could not handle planning the fair as well as the community parade that is held during fair. They reached out to the chamber and now the chamber has created a parade committee that holds fundraisers to financially support the fair and is working on organizing the different aspects of the parade.

Throughout the year, various committees work together on different projects and events. Also, organizations are invited to Chamber and other meetings to give an update on what they are working on so we can all be united in our efforts for Bassett.

The local newspaper prints a news article from the different meetings held in Bassett. This allows the public to become aware of what is going on in our community.

4) Has your community conducted a survey in the last three years?

Yes. As mentioned previously we conducted a community survey with the help of CNEDD in the summer of 2007. A town hall meeting was held after the results were tabulated to present the findings to the community. At that meeting ideas were presented and compiled for City Council, Economic Development Committee and the Economic Development Coordinator to work on in the coming years.

Results from that meeting indicated an area that needed to be worked on was youth involvement. Out of this grew the Rock County Youth Leadership Class. Recycling was another area. One individual on the City Council is looking into the possibility of bringing a recycling center to town. And lastly, an area that always needs to be worked on continually is business retention and expansion. We are happy to say we have one business that is expanding, two businesses with new owners and one new business to open in our community in the past six months.

5) Has your community conducted an inventory of resources or begun to enter data into the Location One Information System (LOIS) or the Nebraska Economic Development Info (NEDI online)?

Yes. The information was just updated in August of 2010.

6) Does your community have a website? Yes

Website: www.bassettnebr.com

7) Did your community submit a website nomination for the Governor's Community Spirit Award?

Yes No (10 points for web submission)