



Press Release

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Siouxland Region Ranks Tops in Nation for Economic Development

SIOUX CITY, Iowa, Nebraska, South Dakota – The Siouxland region ranks first in the nation for economic development, according to results released today by a leading corporate real estate publication based in suburban Atlanta, Georgia.

Ron Starner, General Manager of *Site Selection* magazine, was in Siouxland to announce that the Sioux City, Iowa, Nebraska, South Dakota metropolitan region won the 2007 economic development competition for communities with populations between 50,000 and 200,000 people. Starner made the announcement confirming Siouxland had the highest number of qualifying economic development projects at a luncheon attended by approximately 150 business executives and community leaders.

During the 2007 calendar year, Siouxland led its population category with 23 qualified projects, outpacing second place Morristown, Tennessee, which tallied 15 projects. In a prepared statement, Mark Arend, Editor in Chief of *Site Selection*, stated "The Sioux City metro area's eight-project lead over the runner-up metros in its tier proves that the economic development strategy in place is highly effective. Clearly, the region has the workforce, infrastructure and business climate required by industrial site seekers."

The 2007 rankings scored the total number of economic development projects based on qualifying criteria established by the magazine's publisher, Conway Data, Inc. Tracked by *Site Selection's* "New Plant Database," the annual competition focuses on new corporate location projects of significant economic and community impact. Retail, government, school, and hospital projects are not eligible for consideration. New facilities and expansions included in the rankings must meet at least one of three criteria: capital investment of \$1 million or more, creation of a minimum of 50 new jobs, or the addition of at least 20,000 square feet of new floor space.

Regina Roth, Chair of The Siouxland Initiative (TSI) and an executive with Beef Products, Inc. (BPI) said, "This is wonderful and welcome news for the entire Siouxland region. This recognition confirms that this community's economy remains on a very positive trajectory."

Despite weakening economic indicators in other parts of the country, the Siouxland region's agri-business and food processing-based economy is presently exhibiting signs of resilience and vitality that other industrial sectors and geographic regions are lacking.

2007 marks the second straight year that *Site Selection* has ranked the "Top Ten" communities in the nation based on a tiered system reflecting population size. "We are thrilled to be ranked first among our peer communities throughout the United States and to receive this hard-earned recognition from such a respected economic development trade publication," stated Glenn Ivarsen, Chair of the Regional Economic Development Partners group, an association of regional economic development professionals.

Site Selection's rankings evaluated the tri-state region, which is also known as the Sioux City Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). Communities included in the MSA are Sioux City and Sergeant Bluff, Iowa; South Sioux City, Nebraska; and Dakota Dunes and North Sioux City, South Dakota. The counties of Woodbury, Dakota, Dixon, and Union also comprise a portion of the Siouxland MSA. In the rankings, each of Siouxland's five municipal communities, four counties, and three states contributed at least one project to the collective total demonstrating strong regional balance and evidence that the tri-state area is well-positioned for continued economic expansion.

In 2006, the Siouxland MSA cracked the Top Ten by tying for third place in its tier category. Noting the leap from third to first place in 2007, TSI President Debi Durham observed, "We have some of the hardest working and most dedicated people in the country and this ranking, in many respects, is a tribute to the work ethic, education, and productivity of our local employees." In addition to praising the local workforce, Durham complimented the efforts of the region's professional economic developers, who she said share in the credit for the ascendance to first-in-the-nation status.

Based on the 2007 results, Siouxland is one of only two Top Ten communities in its category located west of the Mississippi River. The Sioux City metro's score of 23 projects in 2007 is so sizeable that Siouxland would have ranked in the Top Ten for communities in the next tier category up, those communities with populations between 200,000 and one million people.

For more information, please visit www.siteselection.com and www.siouxlandchamber.com

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Omaha World-Herald

TERRY KROEGER, Publisher

MIKE REILLY, Executive Editor GEITNER SIMMONS, Editorial Page Editor

Now it's 'Siouxgrand'

Take a drive around South Sioux City, Neb., and one can easily see why the Sioux City metropolitan area deserves its No. 1 national ranking for economic development.

The area is honored in the March issue of Site Selection magazine, a respected trade publication that focuses on corporate real estate and economic development. The 23 development projects in the Siouxland region placed it first, by a wide margin, among communities with populations of 50,000 to 200,000 people.

The national ranking reinforces the area's reputation as one of the strongest business climates in the nation. Over the past 10 years, non-farm employment has grown there by more than 40 percent.

"People are happy here," Lance Hedquist, South Sioux City's city administrator, told The World-Herald. "This is the place to be and where it's happening."

The award also reflects South Sioux City's positive attitude, can-do spirit and willingness to collaborate and cooperate — often working across state and county lines — on many major projects.

A diverse approach drives the business environment in Siouxland, the cross-border region comprised of four counties and five communities in the area where Nebraska, Iowa and South Dakota come together.

Because of Siouxland's unique location, business prospects can choose among three economic development programs, three tax structures and the regulatory environments of three states.

Numerous major employers are headquartered in the area, including Fortune 500 company Tyson Foods Inc. in Dakota Dunes, S.D. Even more business investments are planned. Those upcoming ventures and those already announced for the South Sioux area alone — over just the past 13 months — are expected to exceed some \$565 million.

Much of that success can be attributed to the expansion of the Roth Industrial Park, anchored by Beef Products Inc. and its \$400 million expansion in late December 2006. New initiatives include a Specialty Protein Products organic soybean pro-

Sioux City area experiences phenomenal growth, wins national honor.

cessing plant (\$30 million) and a Omega Engineering Inc. project (\$2 million) next door. A Prime Bio-Solutions ethanol plant (\$85 million) is slated

for Dakota County, Neb.

This commendable growth heightens the need to have a well-trained work force in the area. That's a big reason why South Sioux's College Center project, scheduled to be completed in the fall of 2010, could prove invaluable.

This higher education collaboration between Wayne State College and Northeast Community College will be built on 57 acres of land valued by the city at \$2.1 million. The land was donated by the South Sioux City Community Development Association.

Beyond the business and economic boom and a promising new college, there is so much more in South Sioux that appeals to longtime residents, newcomers, visitors, businesses and prospective new companies.

Some examples:

■ Much like the Omaha area, the Sioux City area has prioritized riverfront development and improved design standards. The impressive Marina Inn Conference Center graces the banks of the Missouri River. Many other buildings incorporate a wel-

coming design theme of the Prairie school.

■ There are 14 miles of bicycle paths, with more routes planned.

■ A 15-field soccer complex, among the largest in the state, draws huge crowds for games and tournaments. The 84-pad campground has proven extremely popular as well, along with the city's Scenic Park area.

■ The region's fiber-optic services are first-rate. This impressive high-tech network facilitates connectivity, particularly between the city and its high school, and allows any home or business to have access to high-speed Internet.

Community leaders in the three-state Siouxland region rightly deserve praise for continuing to make impressive strides. It's particularly satisfying to see these collaborative efforts promote economic development and expansion and build great places to live and work. Well done, indeed.

