



IN THE Corridor

MARCH 2016

MASON CITY SITE RECOGNIZED AS AN IOWA CERTIFIED SITE

BACK IN JULY, GOVERNOR TERRY Branstad and Lt. Governor Kim Reynolds announced six new industrial sites have achieved certification through the Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) certified site program, including Mason City's Indianhead South site. It was the culmination of a long process that began with the strategic planning initiative way back in 2012.

So what is a certified site and why do we have one?

A certified shovel-ready site is a contiguous parcel of land uninterrupted by easements, roads or other crossings for which a group of interested parties has worked preemptively to address all major land control, permitting, zoning and infrastructure issues prior to consideration of the site by a prospective business or developer. In many cases, certification also means that other local criteria such as incentives, variance schedules and other data have been prepared and authorized by applicable bodies of government ahead of time.

Long gone are the days when an economic development group could pile in the car with a developer, drive out to a cornfield on the edge of town and talk glowingly about the 'potential' the site has. Today's incredibly fast-paced decision-making environment demands that soil tolerance surveys, wetland mitigation maps, archaeological

surveys, incontrovertible land cost documentation and much, much [much] more be available before ever setting eyes upon a site.

Site certification, then, is a risk mitigation instrument increasingly demanded in site selector and corporate real estate professional-led site searches. Think of it like a qualified third-party house inspection you'd enlist before listing your home for sale, only it is a sometimes years-long inspection followed by extensive issue mitigation prior to ever putting the house on the market.

In an effort to address this new marketplace condition and the lack of project-ready industrial sites in the state, the Iowa Economic Development Authority rolled out the Iowa Certified Site Program in May 2012. It is an independent, third-party certification program that uses the nationally recognized site selection firm of McCallum Sweeney Consulting (MSC) as the sole certifying agent. The Iowa Certified Site Program is designed to consider a combination of national site location standards as well as Iowa's

natural assets and industry needs of the state's targeted sectors.

"The ability of our community to showcase a certified site that is ready for development is invaluable," commented City Administrator Brent Trout, City of Mason City. "The completion of this certification program provides our community the opportunity to compete for projects that have short time frames of submission that may have otherwise been missed out on. We are excited about the growth opportunities this site will bring to Mason City."

"The North Iowa Corridor is proud of the partnership with the City of Mason City to complete the extensive work required to obtain designation as a certified site. It is great to be in a region that truly understands the importance of working together," said Chad Schreck, President & CEO, North Iowa Corridor. "This site provides us with one of the most attractive and marketable development sites around, and we have already begun to see extensive interest."

MASON CITY INDUSTRIAL SITE INDIANHEAD SOUTH

43rd Street SW & South Pierce Avenue

145 ACRES **8** MILES **1** MILE
from Interstate 35 Avenue of the Saints



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