

Tom Schommer

2404 Taylor Avenue

Norfolk, NE 68701

402-841-2337

tom@telebeep.com

For Immediate Release

October 14, 2008

Tom Schommer, Candidate for Mayor of Norfolk released the following statement regarding his proposed Job Creation Plan for Norfolk.

A Proposed Action Plan for Job Creation

Overall Timeline – 120 Days

Norfolk, much like the rest of America, is entering a period of time where every new job as well as every existing job will be even more important. We have talented young people entering our workforce, while at the same time, we have baby boomers exiting the workforce and looking for benefits and amenities that our community can offer them.

As leaders, we have an obligation to show vision and compassion to provide opportunities and amenities for those who provided for us, as well as give our young people a reason to stay in or return back to our community. The big question is, “Where will they work?”

Our local economy and the lives of hard working citizens of Norfolk and the surrounding area depends on leadership that will address these critical and essential needs.

****“If you don’t see the value of a Job Creation Plan, I urge you to go down to Columbus and look east on Hwy 30. You’ll see a landscape of business, retail and industry that did not exist 10 years ago, with jobs that in part, came from Norfolk.”****

“Our policies need to focus on new job creation, therefore, broadening the tax burden, so that more tax revenues will be created without raising existing property taxes.”

The subject of Job Creation is very important and few people seem to want to talk about it. As community leaders, we must be proactive and have a plan that can deal with these immediate needs and to address them quickly.

To address these needs, I would propose the following:

Step 1 >> IMMEDIATELY Conduct a Community Attitude Survey

Purpose:

The purpose of the survey would be to help local officials serve the community in a more efficient and effective manner. The survey would be used as a positive tool to clearly indicate areas of strength as well as help identify areas in which we have opportunities to improve how we meet the needs and deliver services to the community.

The survey would be given out to every 6th household in Norfolk and would be evenly distributed throughout all neighborhoods in the community. The survey would also be conducted with a random cross section of businesses in the community.

The Survey would allow citizens and businesses people to rate various aspects of our community as well as give them a sense of empowerment. It would show that their assessment of our community is vital in future planning for Norfolk. This survey could be conducted every 3 years as a tool for feedback from our community residents and businesses.

Areas addressed in the survey could include the following: Mayor and City Council, County Board, Chamber of Commerce, Schools, City and County Services, City Staff, Local Media, Safety and Environmental Issues, Living and Quality of Life, Local Industry, Tax Reduction, Post Office, Budgetary Issues, plus more.

** A copy of a Potential Survey is attached and not intended to be used in its current form. More input is needed and it certainly should be modified to apply more directly to our community.

All responses to the questionnaire will be anonymous and only information summarized for the entire community will be utilized.

The questionnaire could be distributed by college students on one night and picked up the following night. Completed Surveys could be placed in a plastic grocery bag on the front doorknob to be picked up, or may be delivered to City Hall.

- **Review the results** and meet with each of the respective boards or leaders of the various areas surveyed to study the results.
- **Release the results** to the media and publish the results on the City of Norfolk's website for the public to review.
- **Use the results** to validate areas of strength currently present in various aspects of our community. Also use the results to help identify areas in which we have opportunities to improve how we meet the needs and deliver services to the community.
- Most importantly, openly communicate both the strengths as well as the areas of opportunity for improvement to the people of Norfolk. **THIS BUILDS TRUST.**

Step 2 >> Make plans for a Job Creation Summit to be held in Norfolk

Participants and leaders of the Summit could include: Local business owners, City and County officials, Economic Development Professionals in the community, Media, School Board Members, plus others.

Purpose:

The purpose of the Job Creation Summit would be to come up with a plan to create 300 primary jobs in the next 4 years. These jobs would be created through a combination of assisting existing businesses in expand their businesses as well as recruiting new businesses to come to Norfolk. Some of the new jobs will be ancillary jobs like restaurant services, retail outlets, construction, transportation, etc.

- Phase One: Invite all existing business owners to participate in an Open Conference and ask to hear their ideas on what it would take to assist them in expanding their respective business to create more jobs.
- Phase Two: Invite leaders of other communities in the area like South Sioux City and Columbus who have had recent success in Economic Development projects to attend our conference and speak to our local Community and Economic Development leaders about what types of efforts have been successful for them. Similar efforts might work for Norfolk.

Step 3 >> Implement an Action Plan With a Focus on Job Creation

Utilize the results of the Community Attitude Survey and what was learned at the Job Creation Summit to develop a properly funded plan that would work for Norfolk. A diverse work group should be used in an effort to represent a wide cross-section of our community as well as bring integrity to the plan. The goal is to formulate a plan that is about the next decade of jobs and the next generation of Norfolk. Doing so would substantially increase payrolls and enhance the quality of life and benefit all citizens in Norfolk.

Step 4 >> Hold an Open Town Hall Meeting to Report Progress

Hold an open Town Hall Meeting 90-days following the implementation of a formal plan to report the progress of the plan to the community. This puts accountability into the process and gives an additional opportunity for citizen input.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

It is important to note that a successful Job Creation Plan would play a vital role in carrying out Mayor Adams and the City Council's Top 10 Goals for Fiscal Year 2008 – 2009. These 10 goals require proper funding and the positive impact of a successful Job Creation Plan would inject much needed capital into these projects by enhancing City revenues.

This Job Creation Plan could build on the successes we have had in the past at the same time create the next chapter of growth for Norfolk. Doing so will build a brighter future for our younger generation, while at the same time, honoring the efforts of the past.