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MAJOR GIFT TO 2015 VISION EXPANDS ICE SKATING AND SPORTS OPPORTUNITIES FOR LINCOLN



Photo courtesy of DLR Group

John Breslow donation brings University of Nebraska and city of Lincoln together to benefit students and citizens.

December 20, 2007 – Lincoln, Neb. – Lincoln’s ice skating enthusiasts will have less waiting and travel time, thanks to a major gift from John Breslow. A Lincoln Ice Center will be built in Lincoln’s West Haymarket/Sports Triangle to benefit the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the City of Lincoln.

The Lincoln Ice Center is expected to cost \$11-13 million and include two full sheets of ice within the indoor facility.

“It is anticipated that 80 percent of the cost will be privately funded,” said Terry Fairfield, CEO of the University of Nebraska Foundation. “John Breslow’s gift provides the leadership needed to spur future fundraising for the project.”

Fairfield said there is potential for a third outdoor sheet of ice to be incorporated into the design, creating an outdoor public skating area during winter months.

The lead gift from Breslow will allow site planning and design to begin; construction will depend on site selection and fundraising progress.

Breslow and his family owned a Lincoln business, Linweld, for more than 60 years before selling the business last year. Breslow also served as Nebraska’s State Auditor from 1991 to 1999. He is a hockey enthusiast and minority owner of the Phoenix Coyotes, a National Hockey League team. Breslow said he was interested in giving back to the community, particularly youth age 2 to 22.

“This is an opportunity to give back to the University of Nebraska which means so much to me, and to the community of Lincoln, which means so much to me,” Breslow said. “As an avid ice fan, I would like to see the community have greater availability for intramural, city recreational

leagues, ice sports clubs and public skating. This holiday gift, to help build the Ice Center, is my way of saying thank you.”

Lincoln Mayor Chris Beutler said the city and university will work out arrangements to share ice scheduling so UNL intramural and club teams, city recreational leagues and the public can all enjoy the additional ice.

“Once again, we are seeing the power of partnerships and the ‘can do’ attitude of this community,” Beutler said. “The result is a project that benefits the entire city. We are working with UNL to keep fees low so everyone will have the opportunity to skate. It’s another entertainment option that will help to keep our young people in Lincoln. It will attract visitors and tourism dollars to our community. And it again demonstrates that Lincoln is a growing and dynamic city where we work together to make great things happen.”

University of Nebraska-Lincoln Chancellor Harvey Perlman said the Ice Center will be a great benefit to intramural and club sports.

“John is an alumnus and long-time supporter of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln,” Perlman said. “He has provided scholarship support to dozens of students, and this latest gift is even more evidence of his support and focus on students. Certainly, first rate facilities like this one are part of the package that can attract students to enroll at UNL. Thus this project will contribute to the quality of life in Lincoln and make the university more attractive as well.”

Tom Price, a board member of the Lincoln Ice Hockey Association, said the ice rink will have an economic impact on the city of Lincoln.

“The minute we have a rink here, we will be able to host tournaments and draw families from Kansas City, South Sioux City, Des Moines and all over the Midwest,” he said. “They would like to come here now because of our central location, but we simply don’t have the facilities. Now, we can host tournaments all summer long and have kids, their siblings, their parents and their grandparents coming to Lincoln to stay in our hotels and eat in our restaurants. The economic impact will be huge.”

The final West Haymarket project site will be selected based upon land availability, environmental conditions, economics, pedestrian and motor vehicle access and proximity to downtown, Haymarket and the university. The city and university hope to open the new facility before the 2010 Winter Olympic Games. The specific opening date will depend upon completion of fundraising, title and environmental review, design, public and governmental review, off-site infrastructure and the weather.

UNL and the City of Lincoln will contribute to some of the site selection and construction costs. Once the capital costs are paid, the facility’s income and revenues are then projected by a UNL Campus Recreation feasibility study to cover the on-going operating and maintenance costs.

UNL and the city administration have also agreed in principle to use professional ice facility expertise to ensure a quality design facility that will minimize on-going operating expenses and maximize scheduling opportunities.

2015 Vision is a group of Lincoln business and civic leaders dedicated to revitalizing Lincoln for the next generation. Two priority projects for the group are the West Haymarket expansion and development of the Nebraska Sports Triangle, which is the area between Memorial Stadium, the expanded Haymarket Park and West Haymarket Arena. This will provide space for state and regional sports tournaments while sharing parking and providing food, beverage and shopping opportunities before and after the games.