

# 'These are my neighbors'



Rogers Kitchens Owners James and Courtney Smith pose for a photo with their Retention BREAD Award. From left to right: Courtney Smith, James Smith, NCDC Board Chairman Chris Jewell and Norwich Mayor Swarnjit Singh.

CONNOR LINSKEY/NORWICH BULLETIN

## Numerous Norwich businesses honored at annual meeting

### Connor Linskey

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2025 was a year full of momentum for the city of Norwich, according to Kevin Brown, president of the Norwich

Community Development Corporation (NCDC).

Brown highlighted projects in the city from the last year at NCDC's annual meeting Jan. 30. In the spotlight were housing projects, the Occum Industrial Center and the Norwich business com-

munity.

The city added new housing options for potential residents, as the Reid & Hughes, Lower Broadway and Water Street Lofts projects were completed,

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delivering nearly 80 units to Downtown Norwich.

Two other projects that were underway in 2025 at Ponemah Mill South and 101 Water Street will deliver more than 200 units. Both of those are expected to be completed before the end of 2026.

In 2025, the Occum Industrial Center project gained municipal and state level approvals. A groundbreaking and tenant announcements are expected in the second quarter of 2026.

## Business growth in the city

2025 also saw business development in Norwich. La Stella Pizzeria moved to 80 Broadway to support expansion in early 2025. That fall, Clark & Co. was opened at 307 Main Street. The business includes a full-service bakery, healthy food options for lunch and dinner as well as bouquets and other gifts for those visiting loved ones at Backus Hospital.

The Norwich Sea Unicorns had a successful 2025 season, as they won the Futures Collegiate Baseball League for the third season in a row. The team returns to play at Dodd Stadium in 2026 and Brown ensured that the site's future looks bright.

"You should be hopeful that Dodd Stadium is going to stick around for a while and activity is going to occur there of some type," Brown said at the annual meeting. "Families will still have a place to go and enjoy a family activity at that facility."



**Nathan McCaskill is presented with the first ever Spirit of Unity Award from NCDC. From left to right: Global City Norwich Director Bobbie Braboy, NCDC Board Chairman Chris Jewell, McCaskill, Norwich Mayor Swarnjit Singh and NCDC President Kevin Brown. CONNOR LINSKEY/NORWICH BULLETIN**

The reimagining of the site of the former Norwich State Hospital is slated to move forward in 2026. In 2025, NCDC and the City of Norwich secured a \$250,000 planning grant and a \$100,000 environmental assessment grant for the property. Both grants will be used in 2026. The vision for the site is to create a sense of place for city residents and visitors alike.

## First recipient of the Spirit of Unity Award

At the annual meeting, NCDC honored Nathan McCaskill as the first recipient of the Spirit of Unity Award for cleaning the streets of downtown Nor-

wich.

"I didn't start cleaning the streets to get attention," McCaskill said. "I did it because this is my home. These are my neighbors, and I believe everyone deserves to walk safely on their own streets."

## City businesses honored

In addition to McCaskill, NCDC distributed BREAD (Business Retention, Expansion, Attraction and Development) Awards to businesses that made significant contributions to the community.

El Traviezo, Rogers Kitchens and Quercia's Auto Repair received the Re-

tention BREAD Award for their loyalty to Norwich. Rogers Kitchens has been a mainstay in eastern Connecticut for decades, serving Norwich since 1955.

Mommy's Delicious Food, La Stella Pizzeria and Path 2 Wellness earned the Expansion BREAD Award for growing their businesses.

The BREAD Attraction Award went to businesses willing to invest in Norwich. This award went to TMG Plumbing & Disaster Solutions, Moon Convenience and Spice & Slice Asian Farmer's Market.

Wonder Works Construction Corporation and Clark & Co. eatery took home the Development BREAD Award for the vision of their businesses.