

“Progress in Motion”

Prosser Economic Development Association



Volume I 2006

Business Enhancement Project

Interested community members, and property and business owners met on January 24, 2006 for the second meeting geared to revitalize the Prosser business core. The WSU grad students recommendations were reviewed. Discussions centered on CTED's Main Street Program, the need for, and focus of the group. Operational structure for the organization was also discussed. A committee was formed to further explore funding resources and group structure.

The Case For Doing Business in Rural Areas

- Access to an under utilized skilled but motivated work force
- Up to 20% lower labor costs
- Low turnover, absenteeism & tardiness & a strong work ethic
- Lower operating costs
- Savings up to 50% on facilities
- More affordable real estate options
- Supportive business climate
- Business tax incentives

Short Takes

Eastern Washington Growth: As of June 2005, Benton County is the 3rd fastest growing county in the state. The Tri Cities ranks 11th in the nation for total employment gains.

Minimum Wage Increase: The new minimum wage of \$7.63 went into effect January 1.

Manufacturers Survey

Tridec and Prosser EDA are partnering in a confidential survey geared towards manufacturing/value-added production. Selected companies within the Prosser community will be asked to participate in order to obtain valuable information to assist this business sector. During the month of February, Prosser EDA Board members and staff will be meeting with company managers to assess needs and address issues within the industry.

Small Business Support

There is a wide array of support available if you are interested in starting up a new business or expanding an existing one.

- LawInfo.com has a variety of forms, frequently asked questions and helpful tips for the business owner.
- Columbia Basin College has developed a non profit campus based business known as Creative Marketing Consultants. Students provide marketing and design promotions, both print and other media. Prosser based Kestrel Vintners used students' label designs and recently doubled annual wine sales. Contact Gene Holand at 509 547-0511 ext. 2355 or email gholand@columbiabasin.edu for more info.
- Shared Work Program: During an economic slowdown this program saves employers money in terms of lowering payroll costs and retaining skilled workers. If employees have a reduction of 1 day in their work week they would be eligible for 20% of their unemployment insurance weekly benefit. For further program information call 1-800-752-2500.

Did You Know?

For every two jobs in the travel and tourism industry sector, one is created in support industries; including insurance, finances, construction, wholesale trade, construction, business services and government. *From the WA State Office of Trade and Economic Development, Business & Tourism Development*

The Economic Development Administration has expanded it's 2007 budget by \$47 million to \$327 million. The Administration's emphasis is to work collaboratively with other federal partners to establish a proactive, regionally based framework to empower Americas' communities to be globally competitive.

Women start businesses at twice the rate of business startups overall, according to the U.S. Small Business Administration. To help them, the SBA has started a new web site, "MY BIZ for Women," at <http://www.SBA.gov/women>. It provides information on starting and growing a small business, getting capital, & finding contracting opportunities. It also includes data and research on women in business, success stories, business tips, monthly guest columnists.

Business & Technical Resources Online

<http://www.pnl.gov/edo/funding> -- Funding sources for small businesses
<http://www.pnl.gov/edo/help.asp> -- Directory of resources for Mid-Columbia entrepreneurs and small businesses
<http://www.pnl.gov/edo/tbd/tbd.aspx> -- Technology Business Directory of Benton and Franklin Counties
<http://www.pnl.gov/edo/jobs> -- Tech Job Connection for the Mid-Columbia area of Eastern Washington and Oregon
http://www.pnl.gov/edo/business/tech_assistance.stm -- Technology assistance for small businesses
<http://www.pnl.gov/edo/sbir> -- SBIR Alerting Service
<http://www.pnl.gov/edo/documents/innovationtechindex2004.pdf> -- Tri-Cities, Washington Innovation and Technology Index (2004)
<http://www.pnl.gov/edo/business/facilities.stm> -- PNNL facilities available for use by private business
<http://www.wamfg.org> -- Washington Manufacturing Services provides services for WA manufacturers to be more competitive

Seminars for Small Businesses

The Columbia Basin College Small Business Development Center offers the following workshops in February, from 6 to 9 pm. Fees range from \$25 to \$40, with a \$10 late fee if you pay less than 48 hours before the scheduled course date. Class locations are CBC in Pasco and the Washington State University Tri-Cities CIC Library in Richland. To register, or to learn about these and other courses in the series, contact Daphne Larios at dlarios@tridec.org or (509) 735-6222, ext. 243.

FEBRUARY 6 - Intro to QuickBooks (CBC, W-165)
FEBRUARY 8 - QuickBooks Pro I (CBC, W-165)
FEBRUARY 13 - QuickBooks Pro II (CBC, W-165)
FEBRUARY 14 - Starting a Business: Questions You Were Afraid to Ask (WSU-TC, CIC Library)
FEBRUARY 21 - So You Want to be a Supervisor - Session I (CBC, B-101)
FEBRUARY 23 - So You Want to be a Supervisor - Session 2 (CBC, B-101)
FEBRUARY 27 - Payroll I Using QuickBooks (CBC, W-165)

ChooseWashington.com

A state sponsored one stop source for expanding or relocating a business.

SBDC Consulting

Bruce Davis, the Business Development Specialist and Director of the Small Business Development Center is available for one on one business counseling the first and third Fridays of the month in Prosser. Expansion, financial resources, marketing, and franchise opportunities are just some of the information that is available. Please call Prosser EDA to set up your appointment.

Staff

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