

THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PULSE

NEWS FROM WEDA FOR THOSE INVOLVED IN GROWING WYOMING'S ECONOMY • OCTOBER 2015

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MARK YOUR CALENDARS

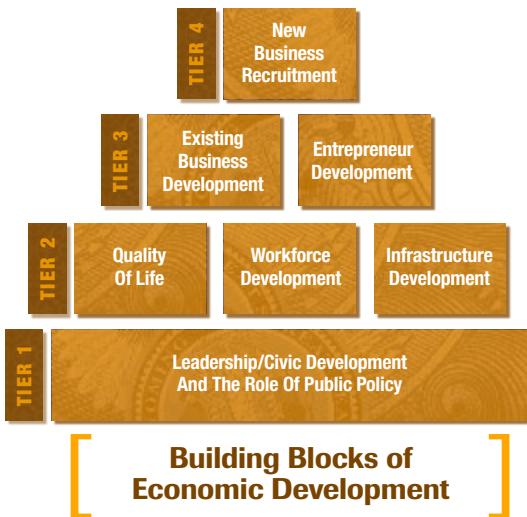
- > February 10-11, 2016
WEDA Winter Conference
Cheyenne, WY

> PRESIDENT'S NOTE

How Do We Support the Leaders of Economic Development?

The key factor to any successful economic development program in any community is having sustained leadership.

One of the goals of the Wyoming Economic Development Association (WEDA) is to provide resources and training to communities and individuals to help grow economic development efforts. The framework for this is the economic development building blocks.



Tier 1, the foundation of the entire pyramid, is Leadership and Public Policy. Without this block firmly in place, the other blocks and tiers will only be partially successful and eventually collapse.

WEDA is presently evaluating our programs and resources, and working together with the Wyoming Business Council, to determine what the most effective methods to provide fundamentals for the Tier 1 Leadership building block to the economic development professionals and their organizations. We're digging in, assessing what the best delivery methods are, and how we can ensure that we maintain the face-to-face network opportunities that are so important in any industry.

One of the first programs that WEDA is rolling out to focus on developing leadership is a mentorship program, where individuals new to the field are paired with experienced professionals who will show them the ropes of the trade, be a sounding board for ideas, swap war stories, and provide that moral support that everyone needs sometimes. This was kicked off at our September conference, and we're looking forward to how the program progresses. Read more about the WEDA Mentorship Program on page 3.

Stay tuned for further developments!

— Anja Bendel

WHAT IS THE IEDC?

The International Economic Development Council (IEDC) is a non-profit, non-partisan membership organization serving economic developers. With more than 4,500 members, IEDC is the largest organization of its kind.

Economic developers promote economic well-being and quality of life for their communities by creating, retaining and expanding jobs that facilitate growth, enhance wealth and provide a stable tax base. From public to private, rural to urban and local to international, IEDC's members are engaged in the full range of economic development experience. Members include local, state, provincial and federal governments, public-private partnerships, chambers of commerce, universities and a variety of other institutions. Each of these organizations is working to create high-quality jobs, develop vibrant communities, and improve the quality of life in their regions.

Building strong, sustainable communities requires innovative strategies, tools, and techniques. IEDC programs and services have been developed accordingly: they provide educational opportunities, analyze and disseminate information, and improve decision-makers' responsiveness to economic development needs. They include:

- Opportunities to network with and learn from community leaders, industry experts, and federal policy makers at technical and annual conferences
- Professional development that strengthens economic developers' careers and communities, and a certification program that sets the standard of excellence for the discipline
- Advisory services and research that creates custom solutions for all types of communities and federal agencies
- In-depth analysis in "Economic Development Journal" and a bi-monthly survey of economic development news and federal updates in the Economic Development Now e-newsletter
- Public policy which monitors federal activity impacting the field of economic development and engages membership in policy advocacy activities

see IEDC, page 3

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WYOMING BUSINESS COUNCIL NEWS:

BUSINESS COUNCIL BUILDS FOR SUCCESS

By Shawn Reese, Wyoming Business Council CEO

The Wyoming Business Council is strengthening the foundations of the seven Economic Development Building Blocks by folding them into the agency's strategic plan currently in development.

The industry-standard building blocks consist of:

- Leadership/Civic Development
- Quality of Life, Workforce Development, Infrastructure Development
- Existing Business Development, Entrepreneur Development
- New Business Recruitment

The building blocks create economic development areas of focus and a continuous cycle of interdependence.

The incorporation of the building blocks into the Business Council's strategic plan takes them from conceptual to actionable. Additionally, the strategic plan calls for an ROI tool that will quantify such building block impacts as tax returns.

The strategic plan is sorted by the agency's Think pillars: *Think Big, Think Small, Think New, Think Local, Think Global*. Each Think category includes goals, such as Expand Value-Added Opportunities under Think Big. Each goal is followed by action items. From there, the building blocks kick in, providing Business Council staff with detailed information about existing programs, partnerships, plans and financing tied to each of the seven building blocks. The information will assist in program implementation and evaluations. Any lack of information will assist in filling gaps, as necessary.

Following is a look at why each building block is important and how the Business Council is putting them to work:

Leadership/Civic Development

A supportive local government and a designated economic development organization are critical for successful economic development. Effective leaders can mobilize the community to plan for and support positive growth. The Business Council supports local leadership development through its seven regional directors, rural and

downtown development (Wyoming Main Street) community assessments and technical assistance, and the Wyoming Leadership Education and Development (Wyoming L.E.A.D.) program for people involved in production agriculture or agribusiness, among other programs and services.



Wyoming Business Council Chief Performance Officer Tom Johnson and Southeast Wyoming Regional Director Lisa Johnson participate in the Underwriters Laboratories groundbreaking ceremony in June 2015.

Infrastructure Development

Business cannot locate or expand in a community unless the necessary infrastructure is in place. In its most basic form, this includes land that is "shovel ready" – meaning water, sewer, gas, electricity and telecommunication services are available on site. The Business Council's Business Ready Community Grant and Loan program helps Wyoming cities, towns and counties build infrastructure needed for development. Various other programs and services also provide infrastructure development resources.

Workforce Development

An available workforce is a critical component of economic development. A company cannot locate or expand if the necessary workforce is not available. The Business Council works with the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services (Workforce Development Training Fund grants) and higher education institutions to improve the workforce and provide information on training programs.

Quality of Life Improvement

Quality of life makes a community worth living in: comprehensive planning/visioning, cultural and recreational opportunities, adequate and affordable housing, health care, good schools, police and fire protection and curb appeal. The Business Council assists with community enhancement in a variety of ways. Programs and services include, but aren't limited to, downtown development (Wyoming Main Street), planning and assessments, administration of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Development Block Grant program for Wyoming and the Farmers Market Promotional Grant.

Entrepreneur Development

Entrepreneurs are among our most important sources of new products and technologies. They also are home-grown and have great affinities for their communities, which leads to support for local programs and other businesses. As a result, we should design our economic system to encourage and support entrepreneurial growth. In addition to Business Council programs, the Council contracts with several entities to provide assistance targeted to entrepreneurs—collectively known as the Business Resource Network. This network includes Wyoming Small Business Development Center, Manufacturing-Works, Wyoming Women's Business Center, Wyoming Research Products Center, Wyoming Market Research Center, Wyoming Small Business Innovation Research and Technology Transfer, Wyoming Procurement Technical Assistance Center (GRO-Biz), and the Wyoming Technology Business Center. In FY2014, the Business Council and its partners provided services to 3,899 Wyoming businesses and entrepreneurs.

Existing Business Development

The majority of new jobs created will come from businesses already located within the community, so it is important to address the needs of these existing businesses. The Business Council contracts with the Business Resource Network to provide assistance targeted to existing business expansion. The Council provides a variety of business retention and expansion assistance including, but not limited to, business



Wyoming Business Council Board of Directors members and staff listen intently during a tour of High Country Fabrication a day before the March 12 board meeting in Casper.

SAVE THE DATE!



FEBRUARY 10-11, 2016

WEDA Winter Conference

LITTLE AMERICA, CHEYENNE

MORE INFORMATION SOON

Conference Bulletin Board

IEDC 2015 Annual Conference
Foundational Transformations: Creating Future Growth & Prosperity
October 4-7 Anchorage, AK

IEDC 2016 Leadership Summit
January 24-26, 2016 New Orleans, LA

GRO-Biz Conference & Idea Expo
February 16-18, 2016 Gillette, WY



Wyoming Business Council Business and Industry Division Director Ben Avery asks questions during a tour of Uranerz's CO2 injection room in June 2014 near the well field at the Nichols Ranch mine site between Midwest and Wright.

permitting assistance, loan programs, the Trade Show Incentive Grant and the Wyoming First program for Wyoming-made products.

New Business Recruitment

A community is ready to recruit new business when all of the other building blocks are in place. These new businesses will add jobs and diversify or enhance the existing business base. The Business Council's Business and Industry Division actively targets prospects and addresses inquiries about business relocation and expansion into Wyoming through professional relationship development, trade shows/conferences/events, marketing and advertising. The division also works with the agency's seven regional directors, the Investment Ready Communities Division and local economic development organizations and municipalities to make business relocation to Wyoming happen.

The Wyoming Business Council mission is to increase Wyoming's prosperity. We envision a Wyoming where industries are strong, diverse and expanding. Small business is a big deal. Communities have the highest quality of life. Wyoming is the technology center of the High Plains. Wyoming knows no boundaries. Please go to www.wyomingbusiness.org for more information. Contact Wyoming Business Council Chief Executive Officer Shawn Reese at 307-777-2862 or shawn.reese@wyo.gov.

WEDA MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

The WEDA Mentorship Program is designed to connect experienced economic developers with newer professionals around the state. During this process, the mentee will have an opportunity to walk through the current economic development issues that may impact their local community, region or even the state. Particular emphasis will be given to the importance of establishing open lines of communication with our elected leaders. The relationship could address project development, professional development, legislation that impacts the business climate, local economic development capacity, land development, and more. For more information contact WEDA Legislative Committee co-chairs Christine Bekes, Powell Economic Partnership, at 307-754-6094 or Dave Simonsen, KBJ Economic Development, at 307-425-1007.

TOUR 23

By Fred Catchpole, Wyoming Business Alliance
Wyoming Heritage Foundation

TOUR 23, an initiative to discuss and document business conditions and economic development strengths and needs throughout Wyoming, finished up June 25th in Lincoln County at the Lincoln County Courthouse in Kemmerer.

With stops in every Wyoming county, including two in Lincoln, more than 850 Wyoming residents had the opportunity to share their ideas, input, and insights regarding economic activity and development in their respective counties, as well as the state as a whole. The program was a comprehensive effort involving the Wyoming Business Council, WEDA, chambers of commerce, county commissioners and city mayors/council members, state agencies, business and government associations, businesses, and local citizens and leaders.

These four-hour sessions in every county gave residents throughout the state the opportunity to participate in the critical economic discussions that are shaping our communities and state both today and in the future. The University of Wyoming's Dr. Anne Alexander provided the economic data and outlooks for every county and the state during each session. Following this, the real discussions and input began. The inclusive and open nature of the meetings sought to bring a diverse and participatory audience into each session.

The Wyoming Business Alliance is currently compiling all the data and will soon be publishing a report for each county, as well as an overall statewide report. These reports will be made available to any and all - and will hopefully aide, inform, and support economic development actions and decisions in the months and years to come.



from IEDC, page 1

- The Accredited Economic Development Organization program, which provides organizations with independent feedback on their operations and recognizes excellence in local economic development efforts

As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, IEDC is prohibited from lobbying except under limited circumstances and from endorsing political candidates. Even without such restrictions, the organization would still be nonpartisan, because members' political opinions are as varied as their work and life experiences are. IEDC does generate papers on specific economic development-related topics, and has provided testimony at government hearings on the value of various economic development programs and policies. The organization also publishes annual reports about federal spending on economic development projects and offer alerts to members about pending legislation or regulatory changes that could affect their work.

IEDC has a wide range of membership options. For more information on the organization, visit iedconline.org, email membership@iedconline.org or call 202-223-7800.

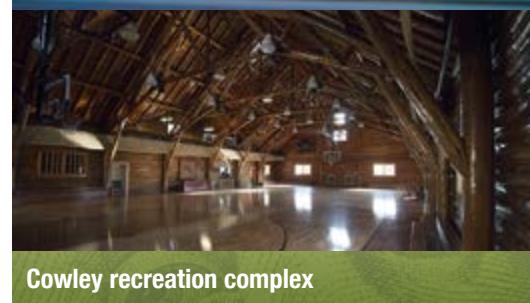
WEDA MEMBER NEWS:

EVANSTON

The Bear Meadows project started construction earlier this year. When fully developed, the site will include a multi-use central park area including youth sports fields, amphitheater, picnic shelters, tot playground and possibly a splash pad. Wyoming Business Council and many private companies in the area donated the \$750,000 needed to begin the project.

The City of Evanston has expanded fiber conduit into the Union Center Business Park to make it more attractive to incoming businesses. The business park is adjacent to the golf course and major roads. Land is currently available for both light and heavy industrial, research and development, and office space.

The Evanston Cultural Center in the Strand Theater completed its renovation this summer. The theater was built in 1917 and was severely damaged by fire in 2007. The Evanston Urban Renewal Agency and Sagebrush Theatre Production received an Our Town grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to create a cultural hub for the community. The project also received Wyoming Business Council grant funding.



Cowley recreation complex

COWLEY

A community facility and recreation complex opened in Cowley in July including a baseball field, splash park, picnic area, administration building and museum, and a restored log gymnasium that was originally built in 1936. The project received three grants from Wyoming Business Council to support infrastructure and facility improvements. The new complex is set up to host events to draw visitors, including the Wyoming American Legion Baseball Class A Tournament.

see Member News, page 4

CHEYENNE

Sierra Trading Post is expanding its warehousing and distribution operations in Cheyenne. The business will be growing by over 200 new employees and adding roughly 350,000 square feet to their existing warehousing and distribution building.

Brewista, Inc. began its assembly and distribution operations in Cheyenne at the end of April. Brewista manufactures coffee, espresso and tea makers and has a global clientele.

Rachelle Zimmerman is the new Director of Marketing and Communications at Cheyenne LEADS.

Laramie County has agreed to apply for a \$3 million Business Ready Community Grant to assist Cheyenne Downtown Development Authority with its efforts to buy the former Z's building. The grant would pay for the building and set up the next steps toward rehabilitation or razing to allow a new project to take place.

Cheyenne DDA will be asking property owners to double their current property tax allocation to support organization efforts in an election this fall.



Oat field in Powell. Photo by Seaton Smith.

POWELL

Concrete work has begun at the future site of the Gluten Free Oats warehouse. GFO is also building additional grain storage facilities and a grain receiving area. The company expects to expand its customer base with the additional storage space. Eighteen new jobs will be created once the construction project finishes in December. GFO also contracted 1,400 acres of oats from farmers in Park County thanks to the rising popularity of gluten-free products. The Wyoming Business Council awarded the city of Powell a \$946,404 grant from the Business Ready Community program in January 2014 for the project. The city of Powell and GFO committed \$105,156 toward the project.

In 2010, the city of Powell received \$450,000, and in September 2011, the city of Powell received an additional \$267,795 in Business Committed grant funds for a total of \$717,795, for the construction of a 2,880 square foot concrete building that facilitated the expansion of Gluten Free Oats. The building allows Gluten Free Oats to complete the cleaning, rolling and packaging processes in Powell.



Computer rendition of Casper plaza.

CASPER

The Casper Downtown Development Authority is currently working to bring an events-driven public plaza to the community. The mission of the plaza is to enrich the community and its visitors by offering a central gathering place that hosts a wide variety of events and activities to build a stronger Casper. Additionally, the plaza will act as a catalyst for downtown development, attract local and regional tourists, bridge downtown and Old Yellowstone District, help retain current generations and attract the next generation.

Over the course of the last three years, the community leaders have studied several successful plazas throughout the region, all of which are being used as models. Plaza features like a band shell, water/splash pad, ice rink, bouldering field, and urban forest will be incorporated to ensure there are activities for all ages during all times of the year. Dozens of civic groups, local musicians, artists, private businesses, and numerous non-profits have approached the DDA to participate in the process and utilize the plaza. Purchase of a State owned building and raising funds have been larger hurdles for the organization. Demolition of buildings on the site could begin as early as autumn of 2015.

AFTON

Afton has nearly completed infrastructure upgrades which have helped recruit a hotel. An influx of visitors is expected when the new temple for The Church of Jesus Christ of latter-day Saints is completed. The temple broke ground in April.

TORRINGTON

Goshen County Economic Development Corporation selected Ashley Harpstreith as the new executive director in June. Harpstreith moved to the area ten years ago with her husband who is a Torrington native.

PINE BLUFFS

Laramie County is requesting \$3.4 million SLIB grant to help build a malting facility in Pine Bluffs for Wyoming Malting Company. The SLIB board will discuss the request in early October.

LARAMIE

The Underwriters Laboratories expansion project into Laramie was among the winners in the 2015 Corporate Investment and Community Impact Awards presented by Trade & Industry Development magazine. Recruitment of the technology center and local and state efforts to help construct an 8,236 square-foot office building in the Cirrus Sky Technology Park put the project among 15 finalists in the Community Impact category. The category recognizes projects that will make big impacts on their respective communities and recognizes the partnerships required to attract this kind of development. More than 400 projects from around the country were considered in the Community Impact category.

THAYNE

The former Star Valley Cheese factory was razed this year and replaced with water and sewer lines for business lots. Funding provided by SLIB helped create these business-ready lots for area recruitment.

GLENROCK

Glenrock requested and was approved for a \$1,350,000 Business Committed Grant by State Loan and Investment Board to purchase a building, install fixed assets and perform necessary improvements for a medical device manufacturing facility to be used by McGinley Orthopaedic Innovations. Dr. Joseph C. McGinley, Founder and Chief Executive Officer of MOI, is a board certified radiologist and mechanical engineer who holds numerous patents, including the patented and FDA-approved Intellisense™ Drill, which he developed at the Wyoming Technology Business Center.



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WEDA'S MISSION IS TO PROVIDE LEADERSHIP AND SUPPORT TO FOSTER ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN WYOMING.

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