

FCDC NEWS

Paul Bean—Executive Director | paul@thinkfranklinco.org



FCDC Director's Update

This is an exciting month. June is Industry Appreciation Month. It is a time to lift up our industry and promote to our community all that you do for all of us. Great jobs, tax revenue for public services, and tremendous philanthropic support through gifts and volunteerism. Our industry provides 38% of all employment in Franklin County. Imagine what Franklin County and Ottawa would look like without you.

We will be running radio adds, newspaper adds, and pushing out messages on social media all month. We want the community to be reminded of all you do for all of us. The city of Ottawa and Franklin County have both issued proclamations recognizing industry appreciation month and the great benefits we all enjoy as a result of our local industry. It is important for our community to fully understand and appreciate the investment you have made and the benefits it provides our community. So, we celebrate you and say THANK YOU.

The best way for us to attract new industry is to have thriving and engaged industry already here. You provide that advantage to FCDC and our partners as we work to attract more industry to our area. Thank you for doing your part to help us grow.

Proximity Park

The Proximity Park is still an area of interest to potential new industry. Yes, things have slowed down with the pandemic, but we are still working with companies that are considering the option of Ottawa and/or Franklin County. The economy will recover, and we will be ready to recover and grow with it when we come out of this pandemic.

We have also had numerous conversations with Senator Moran and his office, as well as Secretary Toland, about renewing the process for identification of opportunity zones. Proximity Park is currently not in an opportunity zone. We are working with our legislative leadership to help correct this and better position us for growth after the pandemic. This is not a quick fix, but we are working it hard in partnership with the city.

Our Proximity Park Committee is interviewing potential partners to help us promote Proximity Park and other areas in the county more proactively. We will work to identify a partner that can help us with branding, industry targeting, and proactive marketing of our opportunities for industry right here at Proximity Park and across the county.

COVID-19

We have been working hard since late February to keep you all informed during this pandemic. We will continue to work to keep you informed to opportunities and potential challenges that come as a result of this pandemic. The PPP program was very helpful to many of our partners. We are happy these funds were made available and proud of our local banks for how quickly they serviced this program. Amazing work by our lenders and our business leaders. These efforts have helped many families and businesses weather the COVID crisis up to

this point. While it appears to be settling down some right now, it could raise up again quickly so we will continue to monitor the situation and stay aware of potential impacts to you, your family, and your business. FCDC has partnered with the City of Ottawa and Franklin County on grants to assist business and industry. The city of Ottawa has been granting funds from an existing CDGB fund which is helping local businesses. Both the city and the county have been awarded an additional \$132,000 each for COVID relief grants. These grants are for smaller businesses between 1 and 50 employees. All of these efforts represent nearly \$500,000 in funds being provided for relief in the form of grants.

FCDC is serving as the point of application for grants from the Franklin County COVID-CV program. While we cannot accept applications yet, we are happy to take calls and visit with any business that thinks this might be a good resource for them. This is a first come first serve basis.

Communication

It has been a challenge for me to not be able to come visit folks in person. I like to see you and I like to see and learn about your business. This is the best way for me to represent you and to know what your needs and dreams are moving forward. I look forward to getting back out and checking in so I can be more attentive to your needs and challenges.

I continue to be available by email and phone. However, my phone number has changed again. My new direct line is 785-229-0855. You can find this number at the bottom of my emails as well. PLEASE reach out to me if you believe there is something I might be able to do to help you, your business, your employees, or customers. FCDC works for you!

Membership

We have grown our membership this year even in spite of COVID 19. However, I want to see us grow some more. PLEASE think about a business in Franklin County that is not a member but might benefit from joining. I would be very happy to visit with them. Your referral and introduction would go a long way in helping us grow our organization. Please spread the word of how being a member of FCDC is a true benefit to your business.

Odds and Ends

I have had the honor of serving you now for six months. It has been a crazy time but a very rewarding time. It has been rewarding as I am able to see firsthand the great people behind our industry. I have seen sincere concern by our industry leadership for your employees and customers. I have seen care for people comes before business profit and gain. You are amazing.

Now, I look forward to ALL of our industry and business to get back to strong profit and gains in the very near future. Please let us know how we can help you in that journey.

It is a GREAT day to live in Franklin County!

Paul Bear

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785-229-0855 (A New Direct Line)