

FCDC NEWS

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FCDC Director's Update

Even during COVID FCDC continues to be busy as we position ourselves for great growth coming out of the pandemic. Exciting work is being done now that will benefit our community and industry in 2021 and beyond. We will highlight some of the work being done now in this newsletter.

Proximity Park

We are happy to report that the park is ready for business. All of the utilities have been installed and are accessible to any industry wanting to locate in Proximity Park. The city utilities are providing water, electric, sewer, and fiber optic service to the park. OneGas has service nearby and is ready to extend to the park once we have an industry ready to locate in Proximity Park.

We continue to have “active” leads for Proximity and areas around our county. We have seven “active” leads right now and we have had several commercial developers reach out in the past three weeks. This is an indication that folks are discovering Franklin County, Ottawa, and Proximity Park. This is a good sign, but we are working to become much more proactive in promoting Franklin County and Proximity Park.

As we shared in the last Director's Update, FCDC has contracted with MarksNelson and Highline Partners to help us promote to the right industry and in the right manner. MarksNelson has completed their study on who our target industries should be and presented their findings to the Executive Board this past week. Based on goals from the state, the region, and our community the top three matches for a target industry include Food Production, Advanced Manufacturing, and Logistics & Distribution. These industries include targets such as Snack Foods, Frozen Foods, Industrial and Commercial Equipment, Consumer Plastics, General Warehousing, & Refrigerated Warehousing to name a few. If you would like to see more detail from the MarksNelson study, we would be happy to share it with you. Just let us know.

Now that we know our target industry, we are working with Highline Partners on a marketing plan to reach those target industries. It is important to use a rifle approach in some of our marketing efforts and a shotgun approach with our social media efforts. We look forward to sharing with you our new marketing plans and efforts in the very near future.

We continue to get leads and information from the Kansas State Commerce Department and KCADC. Our hope is to become more proactive ourselves in contacting and attracting new industry to Franklin County. We have shared the study with our partners in Commerce and KCADC to better help them understand what is the best fit for us.

The study by MarksNelson and the work by Highline Partners is not inexpensive. We are happy to share that EVERGY has committed to \$30,000 of support with these efforts. We are very fortunate to have such a great utility company provide such generous support.

Workforce

A big challenge for us and just about everywhere in the nation is workforce. We need more trained folks for our existing industry and for recruitment of new industry. The key is to be working on this problem proactively in partnership with our industry and our education partners. We will be sharing more of this information and the opportunities that come with it to our industry partners soon.

Today we have had several presentations from a company called Nepris. They provide career training support to students of all ages. This program allows students in the classroom or at home to learn directly from experts in the field what a career is like in just about any field you can imagine. This program also allows us to include our local industry experts. You can think of it as a kind of library for educators and students to use to learn about a number of careers based on their interest and dreams.

At this time Dr. Cobbs is partnering with FCDC to engage 12 area school districts in this program. Once we have school systems signed up, we will be working to get our local industry/businesses informed and participating in this program. It allows us to have day on the job year-round, without transporting students and asking employers to take time away from their work. It is very exciting.

Membership

We hope you value your membership in FCDC. We have worked hard in 2020 to be a great resource to you during times of change, uncertainty, and health concerns. If you have valued your membership, we ask that you share your excitement with others and encourage them to join our organization. The more members we have the stronger impact we can have in our community. We are happy to reach out to anyone, but we need your help in identifying key decision makers and helping them understand the impact FCDC has here in Franklin County. Please help us grow our organization.

Office Move

Renovation of the county annex has begun. While timelines can change, we think FCDC will move into the new office space in January of 2021.

Thank You

Thank you again for your membership in FCDC. Your support and engagement in our community is greatly appreciated. We will continue to work hard to earn your support.

Sincerely,

Paul Bean

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