

August 3, 2020

FCDC NEWS

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FCDC Director's Update

Will you ever forget 2020? I know I won't, but I won't remember it for all of the hardships. I will remember 2020 for the way our community came together to help each other and lift up those in need. As a business community you have provided support for individuals and families. As an organization, we have led the way to provide information and support to our local business and industry. I am so proud of how our community works together to overcome hardships and challenges. I know this is a promise of a bright future for our business community. And just think, we have five more months this year to continue to show how we care about each other and those in need. Thank you for all you have done and are doing.

FCDC continues to be busy and I am happy to share with you some of the efforts being taken to support you and our local industry and business community. Thank you for the support you provide that makes this work possible.

Proximity Park

In the beginning of July we saw a number of "active" prospects for Proximity Park drop off the list due to COVID 19 and the uncertainties that come with it. But wow, what a bounce back we are experiencing. We dropped down to four active projects but have since grown back to seven. We received two inquiries within the last 10 days. This is exciting and promising news as we move forward.

The "experts" are indicating that the Midwest is in a great position to attract new distribution and manufacturing industry. We are seeing some manufacturing leaving China and coming home. This is especially true for COVID related products, but also includes other industry as well. Industry also discovered through COVID that their inventories were too small, and their distribution channels were not as efficient as they needed to be to meet demand. So, we are seeing activity in distribution and manufacturing growth. These trends provide us an opportunity to target some industry as we come out of COVID. We are fortunate to have 300 acres ready for an industry to locate to today!

CDBG-CV Grants

FCDC continues to be the point of contact and administration for our COVID relief grants for small businesses in Franklin County. At this writing we have obtained approval on five grant request totaling over \$79,000. These are funds going directly to small businesses across the county to help them as they struggle with the impact from the pandemic. I hope you are proud to be part of an organization that is helping those in need find resources, provided by the county, to assist their business. We still have approximately \$47,000 to grant to businesses in need. We currently have six applications in process that should exhaust the remaining funds. This activity could not be taking place without your support of FCDC. THANK YOU.

Marketing

The Proximity Park committee has been busy. Under their leadership FCDC has entered into a research and marketing agreement with Highline Partners and MarksNelson. FCDC will be working to formulate an active marketing program for Proximity Park and other opportunities throughout the county. Efforts will include a review of our workforce, our target markets, review of our social media and branding, as well as interviews with community, business, and education leadership to gain great insight on how to move forward. We are looking at how to support growth of new industry as well as existing industry and make sure EVERYONE knows about FCDC.

I want to lift up EVERGY. This great FCDC member is providing a significant grant to help with some of the cost of this marketing review. THANK YOU EVERGY

Health Insurance

As you know we have initiated a survey to measure the membership interest in a group health plan. We are awaiting the data on that survey. Thank you to those that participated. We will share with you the results and thoughts on if we continue to kick the tires on this or not, based on your interest.

Membership

We continue to seek your assistance in expanding our membership. We believe it is important to be responsible and efficient with the dollars we spend, while also working to increase our revenue for future efforts to support our industry and businesses. PLEASE promote the value of FCDC to your friends, neighbors, and business partners.

Odds and Ends

We continue to make progress on our office move. FCDC and the county have signed a Memorandum of Understanding. The county is giving FCDC free office space and free support staff. The savings to FCDC will be approximately \$30,000 a year. We hope to move into the new space sometime in 2020.

We want to close this newsletter with a big THANK YOU to KALMAR- Ottawa. We hope you saw that they donated a tractor to Franklin County. Wow, what a wonderful gift to the citizens of Franklin County by one of our own. This saves the taxpayers over \$100,000. THANK YOU Alan Wilson and all the good folks at KALMAR- Ottawa.

It is a great day to live in Franklin County!

Paul Bear

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