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In the Loop

To: CEDC Board of Directors, CEDC Members and Interested Parties

From: Ted Sprague, CEDC President

Date: 3/18/10

CEDC MEMBERSHIP MEETING WITH KEYNOTE BY SENATOR MURRAY

Please join fellow community leaders from the private and public sectors for a special membership meeting of the CEDC on Thursday, April 8th. The meeting will take place at the Cowlitz Regional Conference Center with registration beginning at 11:30am and the program beginning shortly after noon. Reservations are required and there is a \$30 fee to attend, a table of 8 is \$225. All monies paid go to the CEDC. Reservations may be made by calling our office 360.423.9921, email nelson@cowlitzedc.com or online (*you may need to cut and paste into your browser*)

http://www.cowlitzedc.com/event_registration.jsp

I am pleased Senator Murray is choosing to address the membership of the CEDC and our community during this difficult period of high unemployment. With the healthcare debate continuing, ARRA program dollars flowing and the recession finally releasing its grip on the economy there is much to be informed about by attending this special meeting.

We have already received commitments of sponsorship from **Pacific Tech Construction, Weyerhaeuser and Longview Fibre**. Your sponsorship of the event will help underwrite the costs that CEDC incurs to put the lunch on and I appreciate it very much.

I hope you are able to attend and please bring a colleague with you so they may learn more about the CEDC.



March 18, 2010

MARKETING, VISIONING AND MEASUREMENT

I am very pleased to report that the contract with TIP Strategies (TIP) has been signed and our consultant is in town this week immersing himself in all things Cowlitz County. The Board and Executive Committee worked very hard in crafting a RFP that was sent out to over 20 consulting firms across the United States to find the right fit to meet our needs. After a vetting process done by a small group of volunteers we decided to go with TIP Strategies out of Austin, Texas.

The proposal by TIP stood out from the rest because they recognized our needs are not rudimentary. We were searching for a firm that could look at our strengths and weaknesses, look at how our operations are performing, look at how we measure ourselves and could give us a fresh perspective. I feel strongly that they will provide us with a solid plan going forward.

The timing is right to have this done now as it will be an intensive study that will not drag on. The due date for wrap up is mid June and we plan to have a roll out of the plan at that time. I am optimistic that the plan will help to position us perfectly for the recovering economy. According to HIS Global Insight's (*a respected leader in global economic and forecasting analysis*) forecast models Washington State is projected to have the largest job growth for 2010 at 1.42%. For perspective; #2 is Texas at 1.36%, #3 is Virginia at 1.05%, #4 is California at 0.94% and #5 is Iowa at 0.85%. These are not large numbers by any means, but they do reflect a hopeful look at the recovery.

One thing to keep in mind when looking at job growth numbers is it is universally accepted that unemployment numbers will remain high for some time despite the fact that jobs are being created. That may not make sense at first glance, but because so many qualified workers have simply dropped out of the workforce over the last two years they have not been counted. As they reenter the labor force, until they find employment, they will be once again counted as unemployed.

LOCAL CONTRACTOR (AND LONGTIME CEDC BOARD MEMBER) LARRY SCHLECHT SUCCESSFULLY NAVIGATES THE FEDERAL WATERS

Schlecht Construction and Bergerson Construction/JV recently announced that the U.S. Coast Guard has awarded their joint venture a Regional Multiple Award Construction Contract (RMACC).

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Schlecht Construction of Kelso teamed with Bergerson Construction of Astoria, Oregon, to form Schlecht-Bergerson JV. With Bergerson's extensive marine experience and Schlecht's design-build capabilities, it was a perfect fit. "We make a good team," said Schlecht president Larry Schlecht. "We're both experienced, and we both have a reputation for quality work."

Greg Morrill, president of Bergerson Construction, praised staff members of both firms who worked tirelessly for four months in early 2009 to prepare the enormous volume of documents required for consideration by Coast Guard officials. "Without the dedication and hard work of our people, this could not have been accomplished," Morrill said.

The contract specifies that Schlecht-Bergerson may be awarded projects within Coast Guard Districts 11 and 13, which encompass Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Arizona, Utah, California, Nevada, and Montana. Contracts may include such work as general construction, marine construction, demolition, design/build, renovation, or historical restoration.

The Coast Guard estimates that contract awards will total \$50 to \$100 million per year for the next 5 years. **Schlecht-Bergerson JV was one of only 16 companies to qualify for the RMACC in Districts 11 and 13.** In business since 1965, Schlecht Construction specializes in a wide range of design-build projects that have included office buildings; manufacturing, retail, and distribution facilities; and historic renovation. Well earned congratulations to Larry Schlecht and his entire crew.

KELSO/LONGVIEW CHAMBER BUSINESS AND EDUCATION AWARDS

The Chamber is seeking nominations for the 2010 Small and Large Business of the Year. Last years' small business of the year was Fatcher-Henry Group, CPA and the large business was Lower Columbia College. Another award being given is that of Business Person of the year, won last year by Gian Morelli of the Columbia Theatre. The closing date for nominations is March 31 and the nomination form can be found by following this link <http://kelsolongviewchamber.org/pdf/Business%20flyers.pdf>

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In addition, the Chamber is seeking nominations for the Crystal Apple Award. The award recognizes an educator from a local school (K-12 or college) who provides excellent service to students and is engaged in unique and significant education programs for the local community. Nominations are due March 31st and the form can be found by following this link

<http://kelsolongviewchamber.org/pdf/Crystal%20Apple%20Awards%20nomination%20form%202010.pdf>

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