

Lane County Economic Development Projects Review and Comment by the Lane Economic Committee November 7, 2006

Background

Lane County has asked the Lane Economic Committee for “review and comment” of the applications for funding under the Lane County Economic Development Strategic Investment Program. A subcommittee of the LEC met on 11/7/06 to review these applications. Serving on the subcommittee were Robert Scoggin, Lynnette Wikstrom, Kari Westlund, Jay Bozievich and Denny Braud. The committee reviewed 13 applications.

Analysis

The subcommittee of the LEC concluded that five applications stood apart from the rest in terms of their impact on economic and community development and other measurement factors. The committee had a consensus on all of these projects. The five projects are as follows (and are listed in no particular order):

“A” List			
Project Title	Project Description	Grant Request	Subcommittee Comments
University of Oregon Riverfront Innovation Center Lab Rehab	Create functional labs for bio-tech & nano-tech startups	\$63,140	Highly ranked by all members. Great project. Labs are already pre-leased. A related project was also highly ranked on the Needs & Issues list.
Fern Ridge Chamber of Commerce: Catch the Wind	Implement a Business Assistance Team and marketing program to assist local businesses and recruit new businesses	\$19,860	Good recruitment element. Ready to go. Very active Chamber leadership in this community.
Jody Coyote Relocation	Assist in relocating business that was acquired by Jody Coyote to Eugene. Creation of 25 relocated jobs.	\$171,000	Rapidly growing company. This is a one-time opportunity. Perhaps fund this project out of reserves. Can we tie the grant amount to a reimbursement of moving expenses and expenditures for new equipment?
Eugene Area of	Fund the CONTACT program and buy	\$45,600	We recommend a one year funding only.

Commerce: Business Retention, Expansion, Development Programs	software to assist tracking and follow-up of issues		Good project with solid historical results.
Lane Workforce Partnership: RV Consortium – Road to Success	Training, internship program for youth, plus staffing of RV Consortium	\$100,000	Good education and training outcomes. Critical industry cluster in Lane County.

The subcommittee deemed two other projects to be attractive and important but not quite at the level of the top five projects listed above. Lane County may want to reconsider these applications should additional funding become available. These intermediate projects are as follows:

“B” List			
Project Title	Project Description	Grant Request	Subcommittee Comments
Earth Lab dba Wise Woman Herbals: Good Manufacturing Practices Certification	Funding for manufacturing equipment to meet new FDA regulations	\$53,929	Good match. Well conceived application. Some questions regarding economic and job impact.
Bring Recycling: Planet Improvement Center	Complete the remaining installations required to move into their new site in Glenwood	\$100,000	Good project. Can they provide more match? Should we fund construction overrun?

The subcommittee reviewed the remaining applications and found that they did not fully meet the economic evaluation criteria or else did not fully match the purpose of the Economic Development Strategic Investment Program.

“C” List			
Project Title	Project Description	Grant Request	Subcommittee Comments
South Lane Wheels: Rural Transit Competitive Compensation and Training Proposal	Funding for training and staffing of bus drivers	\$173,563	Important program. No match. Does not match goals and criteria of the Strategic Investment Program.
City of Veneta: Broadway Mixed Use Redevelopment Area	Assistance in developing design & construction documents for town center	\$24,900	Planning project. Does not match goals and criteria of the Strategic Investment Program.
Tarantola Community Foundation For Lane County: Synergy Square	Build 30 live and work spaces by 2008	\$200,000	Uncertain economic impact. Questions regarding feasibility of the business plan. Does not match goals and criteria of the Strategic Investment Program.
The Event Managers, LLC: Lane County Festivals Development	Purchase equipment enabling the Event Managers LLC to provide equipment at no cost to festivals	\$35,000	Good concept. Festivals need support. Questions regarding feasibility of the business plan. Does not match goals and criteria of the Strategic Investment Program
Alliance Business Enterprises, LLC: Section8Voucher.Org	Fund business startup providing software and services to Public Housing Authorities	\$78,760	Uncertain economic impact. Questions regarding feasibility of the business plan. Does not match goals and criteria of the Strategic Investment Program
Menu Network Launch and Call Center Development	Fund start-up online marketing company serving restaurants. Project includes a call-center component	\$150,000	Uncertain economic impact. Questions regarding feasibility of the business plan. Request is for venture capital financing. Does not match goals and criteria of the Strategic Investment Program