SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESS TO BUILD ENID'S FUTURE

By Marcie Mack, Ed.D., Executive Director, Enid Regional Development Alliance



Economic development is often measured by the announcement of a new company, the construction of a new facility, or the arrival of new jobs in a community. While business recruitment is an important part of long-term growth, communities that successfully attract new investment understand one critical truth: strong economic development begins with supporting the businesses already here.

Existing industries are the foundation of Enid's economy. They employ local residents, invest in infrastructure, support community organizations, and help create the kind of stable business environment that attracts future growth. When local businesses succeed, they not only strengthen the community today—they help position Enid as a competitive destination for tomorrow's opportunities.

For the Enid Regional Development Alliance (ERDA), supporting existing industry is one of the most important economic development strategies the organization pursues.

Communities that invest in their existing businesses send a strong message to prospective companies. If local businesses are growing and thriving, it demonstrates that Enid is a place where companies can succeed.

Existing Industry Creates a Competitive Advantage

When companies evaluate potential locations for expansion or relocation, land and infrastructure are critical; however, they also look beyond the site. Site selectors and business leaders want to see evidence of a healthy, supportive business climate. They look for communities where employers are already experiencing success.

That is why business retention and expansion are essential components of economic development. Existing businesses serve as proof that a community can support industry growth through workforce availability, infrastructure, partnerships, and quality of life.

Simply put, thriving local businesses make it easier to recruit new businesses.

When prospective companies visit Enid, they pay attention to the success stories already happening here. They want to know whether businesses are investing, expanding, and choosing to stay in our community.

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Investing in Growth From Within

ERDA continues to work closely with local employers to help support expansion opportunities and remove barriers that could limit growth. These efforts include infrastructure assistance, workforce partnerships, strategic planning, and business expansion grants.

During the current fiscal year, ERDA has awarded grants to several local businesses to support equipment purchases and infrastructure improvements, including:

- Great Salt Plains Health Center for residency equipment
- Powder Coating Services for infrastructure improvements
- Sears Loft for infrastructure
- Ivory and Tweed for equipment
- St. Mary's Regional Medical Center for infrastructure
- The Back Nine Lounge for infrastructure
- Martens Machine Shop for equipment
- Prestige Optic for equipment
- Unique Designs for equipment
- Jos Lamerton Woodworking, LLC for equipment

These investments support a wide range of industries that contribute to Enid's economic strength and long-term resilience. Each project helps businesses improve operations, expand services, or prepare for future growth opportunities.

More importantly, these investments demonstrate that Enid values its business community and is committed to helping companies succeed.

When businesses expand locally, it creates momentum that extends far beyond a single project. Growth leads to additional hiring, increased consumer spending, stronger tax revenues, and new opportunities for supporting industries and entrepreneurs.

As Enid continues to market major development opportunities such as Forge Industrial Parks, having a healthy and growing base of existing industries becomes even more important. Companies considering investment in the region want to see a community with momentum, collaboration, and proven success.

A Foundation for Future Recruitment

Economic development is not just about attracting the next company—it is about creating an environment where businesses want to stay, grow, and invest long term.

By prioritizing existing industry, ERDA is helping create the kind of business climate that supports both retention and recruitment. Communities that take care of the companies already operating within their borders are often the same communities that successfully attract new investment.

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