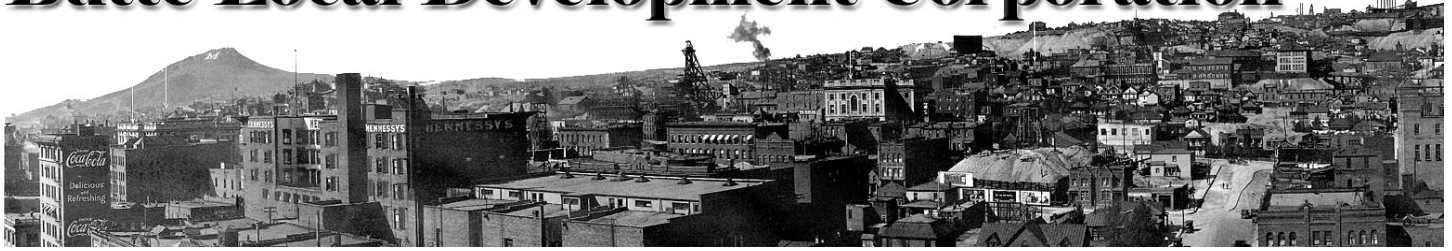


Butte Local Development Corporation



WINTER 2007

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SeaCast of Montana Receives Grant from Big Sky Economic Trust Fund

The Butte Local Development Corporation received notice on December 3, 2007 from the Montana Department of Commerce (MDOC) an award of \$450,000, had been approved. The grant was submitted on behalf of SeaCast of Montana, LLC to the Big Sky Economic Development Trust Fund. The grant funds will be used to pay for the dismantling, packaging, transporting and installation of titanium processing equipment which SeaCast purchased on the East coast.

The BLDC worked with SeaCast to prepare and submit the application to the MDOC. Since only governmental entities may submit applications to the Big Sky Economic Development Trust Fund, the BLDC received permission from the Butte-Silver Bow government to submit the application and administer the grant funds. This is another example of successful, cooperative efforts between the private sector, local government and the BLDC.

The BLDC will also administer the grant on behalf of Butte-Silver Bow. This will consist of compiling bills for completed work from SeaCast, submitting invoices to Butte-Silver Bow for payments to SeaCast, tracking employment records from SeaCast to insure they meet the grant application submittals, and present final reports upon completion of work.

The transfer and reinstallation of this titanium equipment is a major step in completing the new SeaCast of Montana facility. Once this plant is completed, SeaCast will employ approximately 100 highly skilled workers ranging in skills from specialized technicians to engineering professionals. The SeaCast facility will also be the first new project complete in the Port of Montana Business Development District since the REC Silicon Plant was constructed in 1998.



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BLDC Secures NEW Funds for Intermediary Relending Program Loan—IRP #7

The Butte Local Development Corporation has been awarded its seventh Intermediary Relending Program (IRP) loan from the USDA Rural Development. The nationally competitive application was submitted in March 2007 and the award was granted on November 14th, 2007. The IRP #7 loan amount is \$750,000, which the BLDC will borrow at 1% interest for the next 30 years. The proceeds from the loan will be used for business development and job growth in Butte. The BLDC was awarded its first IRP loan in September 1995. The BLDC has more IRP loan than any other economic development entity in the state.

The BLDC is awaiting

approval for matching funds of \$250,000 from Montana Board of Investments (MBOI). USDA Rural Development requires a local match in order to be competitive. The BLDC will repay the MBOI loan at 2% interest over 30 years. Once approval from MBOI is granted, the BLDC will have a total of \$1 million in new funds for lending within Butte.

Loans from the IRP loan funds are used in conjunction with funds from other commercial entities to help finance economic projects and assist in creating new jobs. Potential clients are asked to contact Andy Zdinak (723-4349) for additional information in regard to the BLDC loan portfolio and lending practices.

Economic Performance Report

The Butte-Silver Bow Chamber of Commerce held their annual Board of Directors retreat on November 15th, 2007. John Kasperick, an Economist for North-Western Energy, presented a Recent Economic Performance report for Butte-Silver Bow to the Board of Directors. Mr. Kasperick also presents a similar report for the annual University of Montana Economic Outlook Seminar.

The report to the Chamber was based on the time period of January 1, 2007 to September 30, 2007. During that time period Butte-Silver Bow has seen unemployment rates drop to 2.3%. This is the lowest unemployment rate for the month of September in history. Job growth in that same period was at 2.1%. This equated to Butte-Silver Bow having the fourth highest job growth rate in the state. The best information of all was 492 new jobs were created from September 2006 to September 2007.

Some of the downsides to the report stated there is a potential hindrance for growth due to the low unemployment rate, which means there may not be enough workers to fill all of the job openings. Also fuel, energy and material costs may impact overall spending. In, addition, the local housing shortage may also cause problems for new people moving into our area.

*Happy Holidays from the staff of the
Butte Local Development Corporation.*