

GREEN RIVER FUTURES, INC. BUSINESS RECRUITMENT WORK PLAN

Prepared For:

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INTRODUCTION

Green River Futures, Inc. (GRF) was recently established to design and implement a proactive economic development program for the city of Green River. GRF has engaged this consultant to develop a business recruitment work plan that will focus resources on attracting new business and industry to the community as well as facilitate the expansion of existing businesses in Green River.

This document will help guide the implementation of a business recruitment strategy that will prepare the community for new capital investment and job formation. Action steps are recommended for GRF to undertake immediately. Specific recommendations are made to progress the program in FY 2005, FY 2006, and FY 2007.

It is important to keep in mind that GRF will require a long term commitment to effectively implement and generate results from this work plan. Expansion minded companies need to be identified, cultivated and communicated with regularly. Prospective companies identified this year may not have active expansion or relocation projects for some time.

The following work plan will enable GRF to build a pipeline of prospects over time. Many of these prospects will become candidates for recruitment to Green River. To accomplish this task, Green River will need to work collaboratively with SWEDA and WBC to enhance the business image of the state, county, and city. GRF will essentially need to implement a branding strategy that builds awareness of its locational advantages among companies for which a remote western location would be acceptable; when a prospective company initiates a facility or site search Wyoming and Green River need to come to mind as viable locations to investigate.

Similarly, Green River needs to address facility and infrastructure shortcomings that otherwise might eliminate it from consideration for expansion or relocation projects. These include the lack of existing office and industrial space for lease or purchase; the lack of fully improved and zoned industrial sites, and the perception of the city as a bedroom community to Rock Springs. In addition, the community is under retail and suffers from a housing shortage. These impediments need to be addressed to attract business and industry.

The community's small size, remote location, and tight labor supply suggest that most candidate projects will involve small non-labor intensive operations that would support the extraction industries based in the county and state. Small light manufacturing and technology firms should also be targeted to work toward the diversification of the economy. Recommendations on how to attract these companies will be offered.

IMPLEMENTATION

The GRF Executive Director manages, executes, and administers the program as a sole practitioner. Effectively implementing GRF's program will require leveraging city, county and state resources to accomplish goals and objectives, as well as outsourcing needed services to vendors that can execute program components. Management of GRF duties and responsibilities will require excellent time management and board support. The following represents a reasonable estimate of how the director's time will likely be allocated to run GRF: Program and Board Administration (20%); Program/Organization Coordination (10%); Real Estate and Infrastructure Development (25%); Sales, Marketing, and Prospect Follow-Up (45%). As GRF evolves the board should consider the addition of marketing and research staff to support the director.

The following Action Plans detail specific steps that need to be accomplished in order to deliver the results expected. The Immediate Action Plan (3-6 month horizon) recommendations should be implemented now.

IMMEDIATE ACTION PLAN

1. Craft a community development plan that addresses the city's commercial and industrial real estate, housing, labor supply, and infrastructure shortcomings. Sites suitable for residential, commercial, and industrial development and infrastructure investments necessary to bring the identified sites to market will be a primary component of the plan. It will serve as a road map to prepare the community for sustained growth and development. Prospective companies will be impressed if the city shows it has a plan to address these issues. Grant funds to cover plan development costs could be obtained from USDA Rural Development's Rural Business Opportunity Grant Program or WBC's community development block grant program. Futures staff will update the plan on a quarterly basis starting in 2005.
2. Define Green River's competitive market position and brand Green River as an ideal competitive business investment location. GRF's strategy needs to emphasize rural advantages versus metro areas where most prospects are currently located. Key points to emphasize include: environmental quality, pace of life, low crime rate, low cost of living, scenery/picturesque community, good place to raise a family, outdoor recreation, right to work state, no personal or corporate income tax, market access via I-80, excellent pre-employment and on the job training programs.
3. Develop quarterly GRF newsletter for distribution throughout county and to target companies starting with publication in the fourth quarter of 2004. The newsletter should also be on GRF website; it will serve as GRF's communication tool reaching local businesses and inform target audiences of GRF services, capabilities, initiatives, success stories, and community assets. Each issue should be directed to business retention and expansion issues that would be of interest to local industries. Factors listed in #2 above should be presented to highlight the locational advantages Green River as a rural community offers versus metro areas.
4. GRF should develop fact sheets on location factors, e.g., transportation, market access, utilities, operating and occupancy costs, work force and training programs, demographics, leading industries, economic projections, etc. for publishing on the GRF web page.
5. Due to the shortage of suitable office and industrial space in Green River, GRF should immediately begin the process of identifying existing buildings and sites that are candidates for lease, sale, redevelopment or development. The Green River Business Park offers available sites for development; however, existing park covenants prohibit light manufacturing and distribution. Other suitable sites in the community need to be identified that might serve as candidates for these uses.
6. GRF and the city's Urban Renewal Agency should coordinate identification of sites for development and redevelopment. This proactive strategy will likely require broad community support.
7. The forthcoming Buxton phase one study will likely provide further rationale for an aggressive posture toward retail and services development in Green River. The gas field boom suggests unmet demand for retail, hotel, and housing will not be effectively addressed unless the city acts aggressively to identify, assemble and control prime development sites. Much of this activity should be coordinated with the city's urban renewal director and community planning department. In addition, GRF should request that the city investigate specific state, federal and foundation grant opportunities that could leverage GRF and city development and redevelopment investment projects.
8. GRF should carefully review the SWEDA and Wyoming Business Council's (WBC) marketing plans and the forthcoming WBC target industry study to assess joint marketing

opportunities. GRF can leverage their limited marketing budget by teaming up with WBC and SWEDA on target industry trade shows and sales missions. WBC's FY 2005 trade show schedule will be finalized when the state's new target industry study is complete.

9. GRF should encourage the WBC to direct their target industry consultant to visit the city and interview local companies. GRF should work closely with the consultant to ensure that an adequate assessment of the community has been conducted and target industry recommendation that fit Green River are made.
10. The time is right to conduct an incentive benchmarking analysis to assess the need for state and local incentives to close economic development projects. The Wyoming Business Council recognizes the need to become more competitive having established the sales and use tax exemption for the purchase of production equipment by manufacturers; and the funding of the Business Ready Communities program.

FY 2005 ACTION PLAN

1. Serious consideration should be given to GRF developing a 15,000-20,000 square foot building in the Green River Business Park. The building should be easily sub-dividable to accommodate small tenants ... and perhaps geared toward a business incubator environment where start up and home based businesses can locate to accelerate their growth, take advantage of shared business services, and network to develop business partnerships. Nationwide on average 70% of companies looking to expand or relocate indicate a preference for existing space versus constructing a new building. Therefore, it is imperative that Green River develop an inventory of existing commercial and industrial space to ensure the community is short listed and visited by prospects.
2. WBC attends approximately twelve trade shows annually; the shows can provide current knowledge on industry growth plans and opportunities to arrange appointments with exhibiting companies to discuss expansion plans and Wyoming location advantages. WBC's consultant sets appointments with exhibitors in advance; GRF can participate in these meetings ... the only constraint is the level of participation by other local economic developers. WBC covers all exhibition costs. GRF would only be responsible for travel expenses. Trade show selection will be finalized when the results of WBC's new target industry study are available. Potential upcoming 2004 events include: Denver Mart (August), Mine Expo (September), Power Gen (December).

GRF should also consider joining WBC at the following trade shows which may be on WBC's 2005 schedule: SHOT Show (January), Denver Mart (February), Coverings (April), Rocky Mountain Design and Manufacturing (April). A similar exhibition cycle would continue next year subject to review and recommendations from WBC's target industry consultant.

3. Most sales missions should be conducted on a joint basis with the county or state. WBC schedules 5-6 sales missions each year, upcoming missions are scheduled for California and New York. GRF should try to participate in each. The following represent some of the employer and geographic targets GRF should pursue when scheduling sales missions.
 - a. Selected employers in WY and contiguous states (Colorado, Utah, Idaho, and California) matching the following target recommendations and the WBC target industry study. Targeted industry sectors include: mining, natural resource and energy services companies, sporting goods (Cabela's), and plastics. Fast growing companies, e.g. Inc. 500 located in Denver, Colorado Springs, Salt Lake City, Omaha, Boise, and Sacramento. Info USA could be used as a tool to select prospective companies by SIC/NAICS, size, sales, location, etc. and provide contact information.

- b. GRF should outsource logistics for sales missions. Consultants like iGroup can be effective in blanketing a metro area with email solicitations and qualify interested parties for face to face meetings. WBC uses NY based DCI for this service.
 - c. Business recruitment programs should not be undertaken until GRF has in place the authority to develop sites to meet industrial and office space requirements or has identified a developer(s) that is willing to develop suitable space and has committed to working with the city and/or GRF with respect to the development of parcels in the business park or other city or GRF controlled property.
4. GRF 's web page is progressing well with almost daily updates and additions ... information on key employers should be posted including links to their web pages; reciprocal links should also be established to SWEDA, the Wyoming Business Council and the Green River Chamber of Commerce. GRF's web page developer should produce a credit card size CD that can be distributed to prospects and handed out at meetings and trade shows. The CD should contain a power point presentation on Green River's business climate and a direct link to GRF's web page.
 5. GRF should actively solicit opportunities to speak with local civic and business associations in order to communicate program goals and objectives, build support for GRF, and enhance relationships within the community.
 6. GRF should coordinate with SWEDA and the Green River Chamber to jointly hold quarterly meetings for all three boards of directors. The meetings would provide a platform for each organization to report progress and challenges, and encourage dialogue and partnership opportunities between the three organizations. Local elected officials should be invited to attend.
 7. GRF should attend at least two Trona plant manager meetings each year to keep current with their plan(s) for hiring replacement workers. It is estimated that approximately 1,000 employees working in this sector will start retiring within the next five years. GR and WWCC will need to gear up to supply qualified applicants for these well paying positions.
 8. A kiosk should be set up at the Rock Springs Airport that has attractive pictures of Green River and nearby attractions. The kiosk should contain tourism information and a supply of two page brochure featuring Green River's business climate and GRF economic development services.

FY 2006 ACTION PLAN

1. GRF's 2006 trade show schedule should include: Plastec West (January), SHOT Show (February), Coverings (April), Denver Mart (August), Mine Expo (September), and Power Gen (December). Booth exhibition costs are covered by WBC. These shows represent viable selections, however, the forthcoming target industry study may warrant changes.
2. If the community is serious about attracting a hotel with meeting/convention space, a market study should be conducted to determine demand. The hotel consultant should be well recognized by the industry to ensure credibility.
3. GRF should attend Sweetwater County Human Resource Association meetings when possible to determine which occupational skills are in demand and participate in coordinating labor supply and training solutions with WWCC, the Workforce Development Council and other public and private educational and training providers.

GRF should consider conducting a labor market assessment to determine underemployment, the availability of skilled workers, and the quality and availability of entry level workers that could be recruited by new employers.

4. Local HR management should be cultivated to determine their level of support for attracting new employers to the area. GRF should identify those HR managers that would be willing to meet with prospective industries and indicate that a suitable workforce could be recruited and trained.
5. The percentage of Green River's older population will be increasing and will outpace the national average. This issue is underscored by the expected retirement of up to 40% of area trona miners. Demand for medical services will increase as the population ages. Retaining the trona miner retired population is critical to the health of the local economy; their disposable income will help drive retail sales; they will not have school age children to educate and many may start home based or cottage industries. Recruitment of medical facilities needs to be emphasized to increase the locational appeal of the community and retain an aging population.
6. Priority needs to be given to the attraction of professional services companies. This would include supporting services for the mining, oil and gas extraction industries. Most of these businesses are settling in Rock Springs. The lack of available office space in Green River eliminates the community from consideration for many professional services companies. These firms generally prefer to lease existing space rather than build.
7. GRF should approach Pacific Power to determine how they can assist GRF with program support and implementation.
8. GRF should begin building a resource library that can be used by GRF for research purposes and proposal development as well as the business community. The resource library might be located at GRF, city offices or the library. It would be available by appointment for local businesses to access information on federal, state, and local assistance programs, trade and industry publications, etc. including the Wyoming First Program, Wyoming's Challenge Loan Program, Wyoming's Gro-Biz (Government Resources and Opportunities for Business), USDA Rural Development loan guarantee and enterprise grant programs, and Wyoming's Department of Employment workforce training grant program.
9. A local business retention and expansion program should be implemented. All key employers should be visited to assess their opportunities for expansion and risk for relocation, downsizing, or closure. An inventory of all businesses should be conducted to identify and detail clusters (trona; oil and gas; professional services, etc.). This activity could be coordinated with the Chamber and SWEDA.
10. The lack of available single and multi-family housing suggests that action be taken now to develop sufficient inventory to accommodate existing unmet demand as well as the anticipated demand of Trona replacement workers. Housing traditionally is slow to respond to market conditions. The city should immediately identify and zone new housing development sites and plan and fund appropriate road and utility extensions.

The lack of available housing represents a major impediment to the attraction of new employers. Companies will be reticent to invest in Green River if the community cannot provide suitable housing for their work force, especially new hires that would be transferred to the area.

11. GRF should coordinate with the Small Development Business Center (Rock Springs), the USDA/Rural Development (Afton), WBC's newly established Market Research Center, the Wyoming Women's Business Center (Laramie), Gro-Biz (Laramie County Community College, Cheyenne), the Mid America Manufacturing and Technology Center (Rock Springs) and local banks to co-sponsor quarterly educational programs geared to the

growth and development of small business enterprises. Some programs should focus on helping home based family centered companies/sole proprietorships graduate from their home to a city sponsored incubator or other suitable commercial or industrial space in the city.

12. Community aesthetics are important to expanding companies looking for new facility locations. Green River prides itself in improving the living environment of its residents. The city should investigate the establishment of neighborhood based community associations. They would bring residents together to address common issues and opportunities to enhance their neighborhoods and serve as a conduit to convey their positions to city officials.
13. GRF, in concert with SWEDA, needs to aggressively brand the county and city to build awareness among expansion minded companies that would seriously consider a remote location for a new facility. This is particularly important since Wyoming does not possess a robust business image. This can be accomplished through a proactive campaign utilizing mass email, public relations, limited yet strategic advertising within the Plaines region, and traditional outreach activities including sales missions and target industry trade shows. The single most important activity that GRF could undertake would be to lobby for additional funding for Wyoming Business Council marketing and branding initiatives. The state has done a commendable job promoting tourism but has not committed commensurate resources to branding Wyoming as a business center.
14. Wyoming lacks deal closing tools enjoyed by other states in the region. While offering an attractive business climate with little or no taxes, the state does not have an aggressive incentive strategy that can close the gap between competing states where a broader range of incentives are offered.

GRF can utilize an economic and fiscal impact tool to show how local incentives can be used strategically to create a positive net return to the city. LOCI, a software application developed by Georgia Tech, has proven effective in calculating the net return a specific project brings a community while accounting for incentives, public service costs, direct and indirect effects; a carefully applied incentive policy will leverage new private investment and generate a quantifiable benefit to Green River. The city should consider innovative ways in which it can provide incentives to expanding companies to attract new jobs and new capital investment.

15. Wyoming maintains information on available grants on the web (<http://cowgirl.state.wy.us/grantscat>). Information has been compiled by the Wyoming State Library in the "Catalog of Wyoming State Grants". WBC also maintains Wyoming grant and loan information on their web site (www.wyomingbusiness.org) as well as links to federal programs. The city should assist GRF in identifying grants that would fund program initiatives.
16. As GRF finds ways to leverage state resources to promote economic development, similarly, it should investigate ways in which Green River can more effectively leverage state tourism advertising and marketing campaigns to feature Green River attractions. There is a clear correlation between a company's familiarity with a community or region through tourism and business travel, and an increased likelihood that the region would be considered for a project.
17. WWCC's presence in Green River is a major community asset. GRF leadership should build a case for expansion of WWCC programs in Green River.

FY 2007 ACTION PLAN

1. GRF should consider establishing a support group comprised of local business leaders ... similar groups are referred to as Ambassadors, Amigos, Cowboys etc. This would be an annual dues paying group that would serve to extend GRF's support throughout the business community. GRF would provide administrative support; the group will elect a chair and vice chair and form a committee that would work with GRF to fund an annual event of their choosing ... similar groups have sponsored red carpet tours where prospects, developers, and location consultants are invited to a community showcase planned in conjunction with a recreational or cultural event.
2. Coordinate participation by selected local companies in GRF and WBC sponsored trade shows. Participation can be subsidized through matching grants (up to \$1,500) from WBC's Trade Show Incentive Grant Program. Participants can distribute GRF information at trade shows and identify potential prospects.
3. GRF should appoint a task force to investigate the expansion of higher education opportunities in Green River. The University of Wyoming should be approached regarding the establishment of a branch campus in Green River. Other universities in the region should also be contacted including Pace University.
4. GRF should approach the Wyoming Workforce Development Council to investigate the development of joint programs that would serve the existing industry clusters in Green River. As the city grows perhaps a branch Workforce Center could be established in the city.
5. At this point in time the GRF business recruitment program should have an established track record. On going program execution with an emphasis on real estate development, business expansion and retention and business attraction initiatives (sales missions and trade shows) should occupy the majority of the director's time. GRF should have an established project pipeline that is yielding results.
6. The board may want to consider evolving GRF into a public/private partnership. The goal would be to secure additional business leadership and private sector financial support to enhance GRF's marketing program.

INDUSTRY TARGETS

1. GRF should identify and delimit existing industry clusters in the city and county; existing industries include mining, coal, oil and natural gas production and services companies are natural targets. Additional supporting services companies for these sectors should be identified. In addition, the desire to diversify the industrial base is a key goal of Futures and those sectors compatible with the resources of the community should be identified by Future's business development consultant, Whittaker Associates.
2. The potential for coalbed methane production suggests that companies in nearby communities within this industry sector be investigated for expansion opportunities to Green River.
3. The natural gas boom has driven industrial, commercial and residential construction in Sweetwater County. GRF should target small to medium size construction companies in Wyoming, Utah, and Colorado. Real estate developers also should be approached to meet current and anticipated demand for industrial, commercial, and retail space as well as single family, multi-family and retirement center projects.
4. Green River is located on a major east-west corridor served by I-80 and the Union Pacific Railroad. GRF should pursue warehouse/distribution facility opportunities when suitable sites are zoned and funding made available for road and utility extensions, e.g. I-80 E

interchange site. GRF should collaborate with the UP intermodal facility operator to target potential distribution operations serving markets on the I-80 corridor.

5. Green River could support a truck stop and truck maintenance facility. This would provide infrastructure for the attraction of warehouse distribution operations and light manufacturing facilities. It would also generate additional sales and use tax revenue.
6. Railroad services companies should also be investigated including rail car repair and refrigeration.
7. With the abundance of water in the region, GRF could feature the city as one of the few western/plains cities with substantial water resources. This could be a decided attraction for some companies. A water bottling plant may be a potential growth opportunity; this would also help brand the city if "Green River" is used on the label.
8. Alternative energy production might also be considered, e.g., wind farms; perhaps FPL Energy might want to expand their Wyoming operations in a joint venture with Pacific Power.
9. Tourism and the associated development of new attractions, retail, and restaurants along and nearby the Green River should be a city priority. These types of development would enhance the appeal of the city for industrial and commercial development.
10. Sporting Goods and Outdoor Recreation and Equipment manufactures should be pursued. The city's scenic location and tourism image lend itself to the attraction of small manufactures and support services for these sectors.
11. Small inbound call centers for finance, insurance, and high tech industries remain a viable possibility. To build a persuasive case, the city/county will need to document the availability and cost of a suitable workforce. Similar operations often rely on secondary wage earners. The Workforce Development Council would need to commit to the establishment of an ongoing pre-employment training program to accommodate the traditionally high attrition rate for this industry.
12. Several geographic targets are appropriate for outreach marketing activities/sales missions including: Salt Lake City and Denver (the closest major metros to Green River). Both states have exhibited population out-migration to Wyoming in recent years. The above industries should be targeted; however, this strategy should be complemented by also targeting other small business growth sectors in each metro area. Each sales mission should consume five business days including two days for travel.
13. WBC exhibits at up to twelve trade shows annually. WBC utilizes a consultant to qualify exhibiting companies that might have an interest in the state and sets up appointments for state and community economic development practitioners attending the trade show. GRF should participate in four to six of these each year subject to funding and time constraints; two-three days should be spent at the show plus two days for travel. The FY 2005 trade show schedule will be finalized after considering the findings and recommendations from WBC's forthcoming target industry study. To date, WBC has had some success developing prospects at the following shows:
 - a. Plastec West: trade show exhibition for the plastics processing industry
 - b. SHOT Show: the world's premier exposition of firearms, ammunition, archery, cutlery, outdoor apparel, optics, camping and related products and services.
 - c. Coverings: leading global trade event for ceramic tile, natural stone, flooring and related products.

- d. Power Gen: international conference and trade show for utility generation equipment and suppliers
 - e. Rocky Mountain Manufacturing and Design Expo: diverse exposition featuring regional companies including the computer, electric equipment, electronics, engineering, instruments, plant and facility
 - f. Denver Mart: various exhibitions scheduled throughout the year
 - g. Mine Expo: the world's largest and most comprehensive exposition for the mining industry; equipment, products, and services for mining and processing coal, metals, industrial and agricultural minerals.
14. GRF should develop a target list of retailers based on the phase two Buxton analysis that could be approached to site new retail operations in the city. GRF should also consider attending the ICSC trade show and utilize a consultant to set up appointments to present the results of the Buxton study.
15. Small injection molding plastics companies could be approached effectively. The state has identified prospects at plastics trade shows. Low cost electricity and natural gas would keep operating costs competitive. Large diameter pvc pipe production utilizing the intermodal facility for distribution would be a viable target. Manufacturers supplying the natural gas pipeline industry should be targeted; the sales approach should factor in the state's recently floated bond to finance new gas transmission lines.

MARKETING & PROMOTION BUDGET

The following line item budgets reflect estimated costs for program elements. Costs may deviate based on a variety of factors; however, the budget data shown reflect best estimates to implement the recommended business recruitment work plan.

MARKETING/PROMOTION BUDGET
FY 2005, July 1, 2004-June 30, 2005

Web Page:	\$5,000
Trade Shows/Marketing Mission:	\$15,000
Advertising, Printing & design:	\$22,000
Airport Kiosk:	\$5,000
Consultants & Technical Assistance:	\$26,000
Prospects & Existing Industry:	\$5,500
LOCI Software Training:	\$2,000
 TOTAL:	 \$80,500

WORKPLAN SUMMARY

Immediate Actions

- Develop Branding Initiative
- Craft Community Development Plan
- Regional Marketing Campaign
- Quarterly Newsletter
- Building & Sites Inventory
- Select Development Sites
- Assemble Prime Sites
- Web Page Information
- Assess State Incentives
- Work with Business Council Consultants
- Coordinate Marketing with SWEDA & Business Council
- Promote New Housing Development

FY 2005 Actions

Develop Spec Building
Schedule Trade Shows
Schedule Marketing Missions
Promote Activities Locally
Install Airport Kiosk
Schedule Joint Board Meeting-SWEDA, URA, Futures & Chamber
Attend Trona Managers Meeting

FY 2006 Actions

Expand Trade Show Schedule
Prepare Hotel/Conference Center Study
Establish HR Support Group
Perform Labor Market Analysis
Work to Expand Medical Facilities
Develop Office Space
Secure Pacific Power Financial Support
Create Business Resource Library
Maintain Branding Initiative

FY 2007 Actions

Establish Business Leadership Support Group
Encourage Local Business Trade Show Participation
Establish Higher Education Task Force
Locate Workforce Development Center
Maintain Momentum and Program Continuity
Evaluate Feasibility of GRF Public/Private Partnership