



How does your garden grow?

Forward Cody is in the gardening business. Sound strange? Not really.

Growing a business is similar to tending a vegetable garden. Knowledge, careful planning, organized systems, use of proper tools, continuous care, and dedication give you the best chance of producing a beautiful and abundant garden that brings forth fresh products for years to come.

Following a specific sequence of steps -- just like those used by successful vegetable or flower gardeners -- helps a business owner to succeed. Discovering how other businesses are growing, thinking through your marketing strategy, taking an organized approach, using the proper tools to get the word out and focusing on achievement will help you reach your business goals and set you on the right path towards an abundant harvest, otherwise known as business success.

Existing businesses are the seeds of a healthy economy. Did you know that most new jobs are created by existing businesses? The return on the investment of financial and human resources is far greater when invested in local businesses, than when it is spent on new business recruitment. The result is a happy and healthy business climate that will actually make new business recruitment much easier as existing businesses become ambassadors of our community.

The first phase of our Forward Cody Strategic Plan has begun. It focuses on **“taking care of, nurturing and supporting”** businesses already in the community. A structured business survey is the tool which helps begin a dialogue with local businesses with the intent of identifying trends, issues, concerns and potential opportunities and taking action where appropriate. It is our goal to improve the competitiveness of local businesses by identifying

and addressing their needs and concerns and building on business development opportunities. Achieving this goal will sustain the viability of Cody businesses. It will require an ongoing cooperative effort between Forward Cody and government and community leaders, organizations, and individuals.

BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATION IN A STRUCTURED BUSINESS SURVEY

- Financial opportunities & grants
- Workforce training & development
- Networking opportunities
- Advertising opportunities

There is no cost associated with the surveys and all data collected will be strictly confidential.

Following a one-on-one survey, a local business owner had to commented, ***“I had no idea there were so many incredible opportunities available to me and my business.”***

125 of the 1400 surveys mailed in May have been returned. 61% of those want an onsite interview, an outstanding start!

“Qualified workforce and job training were the top areas of concern. Many respondents were unaware of the many business opportunities and grants available.”

Success happens when you get motivated to take charge, promote your company, and protect your assets.

If you know of or hear of a business in trouble please let us know. Forward Cody, together with our partners, may be able to help save a business in need.

If you would like to have more information, or to schedule a one-on-one survey, please contact me at 587-3136.

- Kelli Thornton

What's In a Name?

We all have one, we all use them ... but really what's in a name? Actually, it's a lot more than just a means to get your attention. It's your label, your identity and it carries with it an instant picture of who you are when used. Think about it. When you say “Big Al,” it conjures up a strong image of who Mr. Simpson is and what he's about. Names are important, as are the associations people make with them.

In the past several weeks, the Forward Cody leadership has discussed the image that Forward Cody is projecting in the community. The goal was to agree on a simple statement that not only answered who we were, but explained what we were about.

During the fundraising campaign, an initial slogan -- “Promoting People, Jobs and Progress” -- was developed and used to identify Forward Cody's role in the community. **That message remains as our rallying point.**

That being said, it's necessary to understand the underlying messages inherent to ratifying this message. As a collective body, the Forward Cody leadership devised a list of words and phrases which expressed their gut level feelings about who we are and what we are to do. This list included words like: ***commitment; integrity; preservation of lifestyle, history and culture; legacy, social responsibility; managed change; responsible growth and people.*** It was evident that board members felt that in all aspects, the role of Forward Cody was one of ***balance*** in the patterns of growth within the community. You can't have growth without change and if you don't have growth your community dies.

Forward Cody will continue to seek ways to ***Promote People, Jobs and Progress***, with the desires of the community ever-present in the process.

- James Klessens

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Looking Forward! Thoughts from your CEO

Six Months. Half a Year. Now a third newsletter. Time flies! The good news is the progress we're making as Forward Cody toward growing our local economy. You'll see in this issue a lot of discussion about collecting baseline information of businesses and housing. To many, that may seem a waste of time. For strategic thinkers, it's the only way to operate. I've learned some great lessons in my nearly two decades of community work. The most important is this: ***If people don't agree on the problem, they will never agree on the solution.***

It's really simple if you think about development much like a mechanic thinks about car repair. Mechanics do a diagnostic check of the systems, see what's **not** working and then repair that part. This certainly beats replacing parts at random, hoping they'll eventually find the problem. I know I appreciate a mechanic who does diagnosis first.

We live in a society of problem solvers. We love to fix things. Unfortunately, sometimes people try to fix things which aren't broken, or at least not broken by everyone's definition. You'll see people try to repair relationships, reinvent organizations and create projects based on perceived, rather than carefully examined, needs. I think many of us have participated in the wrecks that can occur.

Our information gathering is designed to aid us in making decisions that are the right ones. Otherwise, we will waste a lot more energy implementing unneeded or wanted projects.

Communities survive with leadership which understands true problem solving. I'd hope to guide Forward Cody to be that kind of lead organization.

- James Klessens

Groathouse Leader Garners Governor's Award

In May 2008, at the Governor's Summit on Workforce Solutions Fred Bronnenberg of Groathouse Construction, Inc. was awarded the "Outstanding Individual Achievement Award." Billy Brewer, and also of Groathouse Forward Cody Board Member, says, "Groathouse Construction, Inc. is all about service to its customers and just as importantly, its employees. We are 100% employee owned and 100% Wyoming owned and operated."

Highlights of Fred's management philosophy include:

- **Programs Promoted**

Training in the field and office

- **Worklife Balance**

Support of community and employee programs/events.

- **Diversity Encouragement**

Key positions within the company represent capable people regardless of age, gender, or race.

- **Strengthen Workforce** Involvement in organizations that promote strengthening of the Wyoming workforce.

"Not only have we impacted our own work force by keeping jobs secure and creating more...we have impacted many other Wyoming companies and communities." said Cayde Johnson, Marketing Director.

Congratulations Fred and Groathouse Construction! You are a credit to the Cody business community. Your leadership and community engagement serves as a successful model for others.



Our mission: Forward Cody Wyoming will be the community's recognized leader as a facilitator, advocate and partner in the development of a vibrant economy in the Cody area.

Forward Cody Housing Committee Seeks Answers

Addressing Housing Issues in Cody

During the month of April, Forward Cody in cooperation with the City of Cody, distributed a simple survey to community residents. The survey was designed to get a snapshot of the issues related to housing in order to determine the appropriate path for action.

Of the 5,600 surveys distributed via city water bills, a total of 703 were returned and tabulated. In addition to the questions posed by the survey, respondents were also afforded an opportunity to comment on community issues.

In order to better understand the results, it's important to have a better understanding of the respondents:

- 81% of respondents owned their own home.
- The vast majority (87%) were households of two persons or less.
- 71% of respondents were 50 years old or older.
- Respondents were asked to identify the greatest housing need in Cody. The responses were: More Rentals (16%), More Senior Housing (15%) and Home Repair (13%).

Of those responding who didn't own homes, half stated they would be interested in purchasing one. These people also felt the need to learn more about the process.

The survey was followed up with a public meeting to learn about community housing needs. Using the survey results and the comments gathered from the meeting, the following key items came forth.

Listed in priority order, they are:

- Financial Literacy and Homebuyer Education
- Outreach of Information on Housing Programs and Services to the Public
- Need Additional Rental Housing Units
- Need Senior Housing Units
- Need Additional Single Family Units

The informal Housing Committee will be taking steps to address each of these issues in the coming months.



Tapping the Entrepreneurial Spirit

Thinking back over the last 50 years of innovation in America, one can see that many of the things we now enjoy and take for granted didn't exist. Some of the futuristic tools and gadgets we saw on *Lost in Space*, *The Jetsons* and in James Bond films are now commonplace items. How did that happen? Through **Entrepreneurs**.

Entrepreneurs are people who constantly raise the question, "Is there a better way? I will find it." By nature, we are all entrepreneurs. Who among us hasn't had an idea for a product or service that could make us a millionaire? So then why is that we aren't all successful taking our ideas to fruition?

Several reasons jump out most prominently. Most evident is the lack of resources to develop the concept. Most people simply cannot finance the product development stages of an innovative idea.

The next barrier is a lack of knowledge about how to develop an idea. Sometimes simple things like developing a prototype or business plan become obstacles people

cannot overcome.

Another problem is the inability of other people to understand the innovation. Recall that Thomas Edison said once that innovation is like playing connect the dots. However, the dots of innovation are dots that no one has placed yet.

In the past 20 years, our world has witnessed incredible innovation by common people. Fred Smith, founder of Federal Express, submitted a paper outlining the idea for FedEx to a Yale Business School professor. The professor responded, "The concept is interesting and well-formed, but in order to earn better than a 'C,' the idea must be feasible! Stories such as this abound throughout our history of innovation.

What distinguishes successful entrepreneurs is the drive and perseverance to overcome these barriers. The good news is that entrepreneurs don't need to "go it alone." In Cody and Park County, there are tremendous resources available which can **help** entrepreneurs develop their ideas.

One key role Forward Cody staff will play in the Cody community is that of a facilitator of activity. To do so, we are constantly establishing and updating a network of people who know and understand the process of innovation. The Cody area is loaded with people with tremendous business experience in virtually every arena. Many of these people have expressed a desire to help others incubate their ideas. In addition, programs such as the Small Business Development Center, Manufacturing Works, Gro-Biz and the Wyoming Business Council stand ready to assist businesses.

Their role and ours are the same. We help local entrepreneurs and existing business work through these barriers in order to create jobs and grow our economy.

Have an idea for a product or service? You now have no excuse. Contact the Forward Cody office at 587-3136 and we'll begin!

CAMPAIGN UPDATE

*As of July 1, 2008, the total funding pledged to Forward Cody Wyoming, Inc. is **\$1,701,946!**
This is a spectacular achievement for the community and a credit to the faith of investors
in this most worthwhile cause.*

Additional paperwork has been initiated to establish a non-profit 501 (c) 3, which will allow the organization to accept charitable donations and seek funding from foundations. The full IRS designation is expected before the end of 2008. Forward Cody will continue to seek additional investors during the four-year implementation phase. Anyone who would like additional information are invited to contact the office at 587-3136 or via e-mail at jbryan@forwardcody.com

HONOR ROLL OF INVESTORS

ADVANCE DIVISION

(\$40,000 To \$300,000)

Big Horn Radio Network
First National Bank & Trust
Pinnacle Bank
Bresnan Communications
Marathon Oil Company
Shoshone First Bank
Buffalo Bill Historical Center
Nielson & Associates
Sierra Trading Post
Corlene "Corky" Cathcart
Northern WY Surgical Center
Alan & Ann Simpson
City of Cody
Northwest College
Robert Blaine Snyder
Barron & Tami Collier
Park County
West Park Hospital

LEADERSHIP DIVISION

(\$10,000 To \$39,999)

AmericInn
Engineering Associates
Sletten Construction of WY
Beartooth Inn of Cody
Four Bear Ranch
Sommers & Voerding, Inc.
Blair Hotels
Fremont Motor Company
Stine, Heiser, Buss & Associates
CertainTeed Gypsum, Inc.
Groathouse Construction, Inc.
Tanager Beverages
Energy West
Harris Haston & Carlene LeBous
Webster Motors, Inc.
Jeff & Claudia Kruger
Whitlock Motors

PACESETTER DIVISION

(\$1,000 TO \$9999)

Absaroka Assisted Living
Comfort Food Radio
Glenn & Nina Ross
Albert "Andy" Andrews
GDA Engineering
Sage Realty
Basin Mechanical
Goodyear Printing
Schrader Metals & Design, Inc.
Basin Vision Center
Green Gables Inn
Mike Schumacher
Beartooth Harley Davidson
Heart Mountain Chiropractic
Skyhawk Rugs
Big Horn Federal Savings Bank
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State Farm Insurance - Jen Talich
Big Horn Print Gallery
Jerry Thiel & Sons Construction
Sunlight Sports
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(To \$999)

Albertsons Inc. #807
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Kim Borer
Stephen L. Simonton, P.C.
Shoshone Title

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James Klessens - CEO/President
Kelli Thornton - Business Development Specialist
Jeanne Bryan - Administrative Assistant

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