

## Table of Contents

- 1) Strategic Infrastructure Program
- 2) Jon Lane
- 3) Exports in Central Washington
- 4) Partners & Investors

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## Strategic Infrastructure Program Creating Jobs Across Grant County



*The new Milbrandt location in George, WA that was made possible by the SIP Grant.*

“I’m from the government and I’m here to help.”

On the evening of August 12, 1986 these words became forever emblazoned in American culture when President Ronald Reagan, speaking to the press in Chicago, referred to them as “the nine most terrifying words in the English language.”

Earlier that day the President was in Springfield, at the Illinois State Fair, where he spoke on the state of farming in America. It was because of “the current problems on the farm...caused by government-imposed embargoes and inflation, not to mention government’s long history of conflicting and haphazard policies,” that Reagan suggested people should be worried when the government says it can help them.

However, Reagan went on in the same press conference to emphasize new export policies and spending reforms that would actually make a positive difference for farmers and agriculture in America. In other words, good things the government was doing to really help.

It is in this same spirit that the Grant County’s Strategic Infrastructure Program has made positive differences for communities all across the County.

The Strategic Infrastructure Program was originally authorized during the 1997-1998 State Legislative Session. The State authorized rural counties to keep a small percentage of the state’s portion of sales tax and to use it to finance local public infrastructure to help spur job growth and economic development.

This wasn’t a tax increase. The total amount of sales tax paid stayed the same. Instead of increasing taxes, a portion of the tax already being collected by the State is redirected back to the County where the sale took place.

The end result is that for every one-hundred dollars spent in Grant County, nine cents of the sales tax collected that would have previously gone into the State General Fund is instead given back to the County to fund the Strategic Infrastructure Program.

While nine cents per hundred dollars doesn’t seem like a lot, it adds up. On a monthly basis it translates into roughly \$146,000 or about \$1.7 million annually. So what has the Strategic Infrastructure Program accomplished with this money?

This money has been used to construct physical infrastructure including public roads, sewer mains, runways, water mains, electrical distribution, bridges, biogas, lagoons, wells, rail, hospitals, fiber optics, wastewater treatment facilities and more.

While this sounds like the typical kinds of things tax dollars are spent on, the difference is that in each case, these



## Jon Lane, It's "All About Jobs"

"It's all about jobs," Moses Lake City Councilman Jon Lane says. His passion for jobs is why he was an educator, serves on the Grant County Economic Development Board of Directors, and served on the Moses Lake City Council. "Moses Lake is an amazing place," Lane says. "I wanted to focus on jobs so people can stay here and come here."

Lane, who turned 66 in August, has lived primarily in Grant County since his family moved here when he was five years old. His father was a blimp pilot in the Navy, stationed near San Francisco. Deciding to move to a small town to raise the kids, they were here in 1953 when the irrigation project opened. The family broke ground from sagebrush in Block 40.



After graduating from Moses Lake High School, Lane went to Big Bend Community College for two years, then went to the University of Washington for a year. He transferred to Central Washington University to finish his education degree. His first teaching job was in Pullman. He returned to Moses Lake in the early 1970s to teach at Big

Bend for two years before he sold fertilizer at Simplot and worked for a crop duster. Not wanting to work long hours in the summer when his children were out of school, he decided to return to education. To facilitate that, he earned a Master's degree from Eastern Washington University.

"I like kids," Lane says. "Kids are important." He also enjoyed coaching. "In coaching you get to see kids in a special relationship." But coaching did mean long hours so he didn't spend as much time with his family as he would have liked. He taught physical education then got into administration. He taught other subjects to get a feel for them first. His initial administration job was in Warden where he became the principal of the then-new middle school. He ended up back in Moses Lake at Frontier Middle School as a vice-principal, and then went on to be the principal at St. Rose of Lima private school in Ephrata. He says the most "momentous" occasion in his education career was when he stopped a shooting at Frontier Middle School. "I was in the right place at the right time and able to do something good."

"Education was a good career for me," he says, adding, "It's always gratifying to see kids who went through school with me and I had an impact on their life to become

responsible adults."

Currently Lane serves as a trustee of Big Bend Community College. Because of his personal and family history with BBCC, he wanted to "be involved and give back." He says BBCC is where "A lot of kids find their way." Many are the first in their families to go to college, he says, and can find success at a community college. "The things that Big Bend does are so important; it was just something I wanted to be involved in. The celebration of kids who overcome so much to become successes is so rewarding. I just want to be part of that celebration."

Lane's desire to help also led him to run for city council in Moses Lake. "The city's been good to me and I want to give back," he explains. "I didn't have an agenda other than to make Moses Lake a better place for my kids and grandkids." He adds that the city has been able to "do some good things to help the city grow in a positive direction." Lane's term ends this year and he's not running for re-election.

Lane has also been on the Grant County Economic Development Council Board of Directors for just over five years. He says he thought it was important that there be representation of the City of Moses Lake on the board. "They're trying to improve Grant County," Lane says,

*Continued on page 4*



## Exports in Central Washington

**If you can dream it up, odds are you can probably export it.**

Worm dirt, bagels, dried fruit, exercise equipment, and specialty popcorn. What do these very different products all have in common?

Worm dirt, or worm castings, are a natural fertilizer rich in nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, calcium, magnesium and other minerals. It is made through a lengthy process in which earthworms consume organic material and make worm dirt as a byproduct.

Bagels are one of the few bread products, along with donuts, to have entire franchises devoted solely to selling

them. Although popularity peaked in the mid 1990's there are still well over a thousand bagel shops in operation across the US today.

Dried fruit has been around for thousands of years and is a way to increase the shelf life of perishable fruits while still maintaining taste and nutrition. Today, Americans annually consume tens of millions of packages of dried fruits of all varieties each year.



*Local business exports worm dirt all over the world.*

Commercial grade exercise equipment is designed and developed over many years. It is a painstaking process to get the equipment to the exact specifications needed to meet the training requirements of professional athletes and sports teams.

Specialty popcorn or gourmet popcorn comes in dozens of varieties. Most of us are familiar with the big metal tins that come out around Christmas that have two or three different flavors separated by a paper divider.

While popcorn, exercise machines, fruit, dirt and bagels are all very different things, they do have a unifying theme. Two themes actually. The first is that they are all products made by Central Washington companies and the second is that they are all items being exported internationally.

It turns out that just about every product, and even most services, can be exported.

For every North American with middle class buying power there are five people beyond our borders that have the same buying power.

With a reputation for safe food, quality products, and innovative thinking; the world looks to the USA for just about anything that can be grown, processed or manufactured. The demand for American quality is so great that it is financial profitable, to ship pre-cooked bagels, and already

popped popcorn to the other side of the world as opposed to making it there. The same is true for some kinds of dirt.

If you have ever thought that what your business does is not exportable, or that it is too small to export you may want to give it another look. Ninety-eight percent of all firms that export are small businesses and they account for thirty-three percent of all exporting value.

Everyone knows about the big exports like Boeing airplanes, Caterpillar machinery, and agricultural commodities. What is lesser known is that with very few exceptions almost all small businesses have an established export market at some level.

Some of the more obscure markets are for things we don't typically think of such as; art, antiques, soap, handmade crafts, consulting services, jewelry, signs, dolls, custom woodwork, walking sticks, and hair.

Yes, even the hair on your head is an export item.



*Dried fruit from Grant County that is being exported.*



## Strategic Infrastructure Program Cont.

expenditures directly influenced private investment and job creation. Each project funded directly helped attract new businesses or helped a local business to grow or expand.

For example, in the spring of 2014, Milbrandt Vineyards and other local businesses expressed interest in opening new operations just north of Interstate 90 in George. This location worked well because of its proximity to the freeway and easy access to crops. Collectively these businesses were proposing to invest well over five-million dollars and hire up to twenty-five people in the long run. But no water service available to the sites

was a problem.

Funding of \$253,000 from the Strategic Infrastructure Program along with local funding was enough for the City of George and the Port of Quincy to construct the needed water infrastructure to spur the business development. Next time you are in that area, drive by and take a look at all the growth that is occurring.

This is just one example of many. In total, the creation or retention of more than five-thousand jobs can be traced back to support from the Strategic Infrastructure Program. For a

county with less than fifty-thousand jobs this is a big impact.

What's more, the impact has been felt in every community from Wilson Creek to Mattawa to Coulee City to Moses Lake, Quincy, Ephrata, Warden, Royal City, Soap Lake, Grand Coulee, and Electric City.

So while it can be frightening to hear the words, "I'm from the government and I'm here to help," the Grant County Strategic Infrastructure Program has proven to be a tremendous resource for encouraging economic growth and job creation.

## Jon Lane Cont.

adding, "I just think Moses Lake and Grant County have always said, 'Good times are just around the corner.'" The EDC, Lane says, "Pulls together things that bring good times. The EDC is bringing things together to make good jobs happen and cause growth." He says that some companies wouldn't be here, and some established companies wouldn't have grown, without the EDC.

"I think they're 'future thinking.' They are looking down the road to see what needs to be done to bring business here and help companies grow." They also, Lane adds, provide information for companies that want to locate here.

"Terry Brewer set the stage,"

Lane says, "And Jonathan Smith, Emily Braunwart, and Allan Peterson are building on that foundation and helping us to grow in a positive direction."

Lane has been in Grant County long enough to see the "highs and the lows." He saw the Air Force base close and the sugar plant shut down. But he's also seen the growth of the industrial sector when companies such as Genie, SGL/BMW, and Takata came to Grant County. "I'm excited to see Mitsubishi come here," he adds.

Lane would like to see more retail development so residents can shop locally. He's worried about the over-crowding situation with the Moses Lake School District. "If we're

going to bring good people in we need a good education system." He adds that's one of the challenges of growing.

Lane enjoys the "diverse" recreational activities available in Grant County. He likes the seasons and "It's a great place to raise a family." Lane also says Grant County has "good people. Good folk here with farming being the main industry in town."

In his free time, Lane enjoys golfing and travelling with his wife. "Get together with friends and families over the country. Our recreation is travelling and meeting people."



# Partners & Investors

## Founders Circle (\$75,000+ up)

ASPI Group  
City of Moses Lake  
City of Quincy  
Grant County  
Grant County PUD  
Port of Moses Lake  
Port of Quincy

## Platinum Division (\$50,000-\$74,999)

Central Terminals LLC  
Columbia Basin Herald  
Microsoft Corporation  
Samaritan Healthcare  
Washington Trust Bank  
Yahoo!

## Gold Division (\$25,000-\$49,999)

Chemi-Con Materials  
Confluence Health  
Genie Industries  
Hayden Homes  
McKinstry Co., LLC

## Silver Division (\$15,000-\$24,999)

AKZO Nobel  
City of Ephrata  
CliftonLarsonAllen LLP  
Port of Ephrata  
Port of Mattawa  
REC Silicon

## Bronze Division (\$2,500-\$14,999)

Accredited Appraisals  
Agri/Com Appraisals  
Alsted Real Estate  
Argus Insurance  
Aviation Technical Services  
B & D Communications  
Basic American Foods  
Barrett Business Services, Inc.  
Belle Enterprises Inc.  
Big Bend Community College  
Canfield & Associates  
Cayuse Lake View Home Sites  
Central Bonded Collectors  
City of Electric City  
City of George  
City of Royal City  
City of Soap Lake  
City of Warden  
Coldwell Banker Tomlinson Ranch & Home  
Columbia Basin Development League  
Columbia Basin Job Corp  
Columbia Basin Railroad  
Columbia Electrical Supply  
Columbia Glass Inc.  
Columbia Northwest Engineering  
Consolidated Disposal Service, Inc.  
Dano Law Firm, PS  
Express Employment Professionals

## Bronze Division Continued

Gary Mann Real Estate  
General Dynamics—OTS  
Guild Mortgage Company  
Horizon Credit Union  
Housing Authority of Grant County  
Inland Cellular  
Inland Tarp & Liner, LLC  
ITC Services, Inc.  
J & M Electric  
JR Newhouse Co., PLLP  
Key Bank  
Lad Irrigation Co., Inc.  
Lamb Weston, BSW  
Landau Associates, Inc.  
LC Farms, Inc.  
Lenroc Company  
Linage Logistics  
Live Nation-Gorge Amphitheatre  
Mardon Resort  
Martin Morris Agency  
Million Air Moses Lake  
Moses Lake Chamber of Commerce  
Moses Lake Community Health Center  
Moses Lake School District  
National Frozen Foods  
Northland Communications  
Pillar Rock Grill/Moses Lake Golf Club  
Polhamus Heating & Air Conditioning  
Port of Coulee City  
Port of Hartline  
Port of Royal Slope  
Port of Warden  
Quincy Farm Chemicals, Inc.  
Quincy Foods  
Rock Steel Structures  
SGL Automotive Carbon Fibers  
Skaug Brothers, Inc.  
Skone & Conners  
Tommer Constructions Co., Inc.  
Total Employment & Management (TEAM)  
Town of Coulee City  
Trask Insurance Inc.  
Umpqua Bank  
Western Pacific Engineering  
Western Polymer Corporation  
Windermere K-2 Realty  
Work Source Moses Lake Affiliate  
Zip Truck Lines, Inc.

## Friends of the EDC

Justin Ashley  
Steve Ausere  
David Bailey  
Susie Barr  
Terry Brewer  
Jane Dickinson  
Randy Dickinson

## Friends of the EDC Continued

Dick Ealing  
Jeff Foster  
Frances Irwin  
Rory Knapp  
Denise Lefler  
Fred Lischka  
Don Long  
Alan Lunderburg  
Col. Clyde Owen  
Dale Pomeroy  
Jeff Railton  
Sheldon Townsend  
Pat Wold

## Board of Directors

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LeAnne Parton, BBCC Foundation, Treasure  
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Juliann Dodds, Umpqua Bank  
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