

Ellis County Coalition for Economic Development

Promoting the growth and success of businesses in Ellis County

If you are -

- Starting a new business,
- Expanding an existing business,
- Adding to your workforce,
- Thinking about your succession plan,
- Needing financing,
- Not sure where to start on a problem,

the Ellis County Coalition is here to assist.

Give us a call to find out how we can assist you in your business success.



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The Ellis County Coalition is funded in part by Ellis County and the City of Hays

Is Essential Air Service in Hays Essential to Your Business?

If you haven't heard the news, the early morning flight will be returning to Hays in January. The Coalition, Chamber of Commerce, CVB, and City staff worked closely to gather travel data and issues from local residence, and Sky West has listened.

However, this schedule change may not stay permanent. The airport needs to see an increase in monthly boardings, and a sharp increase at that, to see this schedule remain.

To this end, we are encouraging employers to look at flying out of Hays when possible. We understand that flying from Hays is not always the best option, but we encourage you to use Hays when it is possible.

Air service is possible in Hays thru the Essential Air Service grant program funded thru the FAA. EAS grants subsidize air operations for the contract period. SkyWest is the current bid winner for



Hays, but that may not remain the case. If SkyWest cannot make a profit, they may not bid for airport service in the next round. That may leave us with a carrier that performed poorly at best (Great Lakes), or no service at all.

From an economic development standpoint, air service for Hays is very important. Employers looking to expand typically require air service with 30 minutes of a potential

location. Existing employers with headquarters want easy access for management level plant visits and may take ease of access to the location into account when making expansion decision.

We already face a number of challenges when looking at new business recruitment: water usage, low unemployment, high land costs, etc. A loss of air service would significantly add to existing challenges.

Coworking Space



The Coalition is working on a potential partnership on a coworking space in Downtown Hays.

So what is coworking? There are many definitions, but here is a simple way to look at it:

"an office or other working environment used by people who are self-employed or working for different employers, typically so as to share equipment, ideas, and knowledge. The whole idea of coworking is to bring bright, creative people together and let the ideas collide"

Our space would have flexible workstations, a copy center, conference room, training/event room, free wifi/internet, and a coffee bistro with free coffee. Memberships could be

purchased by the day, week, or month. Preliminary plans include three private offices that would be available for an additional fee. Members would have 24/7 access to the facility and events, use of the conference room and copy center, and more.

More importantly, members would have access to a creative environment and a peer network that is unique in Hays. If you are interested in coworking, contact the Coalition to find out more.

Ellis County Housing Rehab Program is Ready for Projects

Thanks to a generous grant from the Dane G. Hansen Foundation, the Ellis County Housing Rehab Program rolled out in August. The program is intended to assist in renovation of existing housing in Ellis County.

Eligible applicants include licensed contractors, graduates of an approved post secondary construction and trades program, or a developer/realtor/investor that provides proof they have hired an appropriate contractor to perform the renovations.

Applicants submit a proposal to purchase and/or renovate an existing home in Ellis County. The application will be reviewed by a seven member review team. If approved, the applicant will receive funding to purchase and renovate the project. There is no up front cost, no debt service of the loan, and no interest. The loan is repaid after the project is complete and sold. A \$2500 service fee will be assessed at that time.



In return, the applicant agrees to four basic conditions: at least \$10,000 in renovations, six months to turn the project, sale price cap of \$145,000, and the buyer must be an owner occupant. The intent of this program is to help meet the need for quality, affordable homes in Ellis County. The Rehab Program hopes to turn six to twelve homes a year.

If you are interested in learning more about the program, contact Aaron White by calling 785.628.3102 or email aaron@haysamerica.net

Investors

Over the past several years, the Ellis County Coalition for Economic Development has requested community support through financial investments in the organization. The support has helped the organization promote economic development in Ellis County and the surrounding area through business retention and expansion, recruitment, and promoting entrepreneurship.

Your support is needed now more than ever. We will soon be asking you to consider a pledge to the Coalition's efforts.

If you have questions about our efforts or would like to discuss any matter, please feel free to contact us.

Around the Town—a Short Update on Development

A drive around town shows a number of new construction project under way. Here is a brief highlight of what's happening in Hays:

- Tebo Village—The Pasta Jays restaurant is now open, offering Italian food, catering, and banquet space. The 27,000 sf Tebo Village is still in the process of attracting tenants. They have confired on signed lease and several Letters of Intent. The Coalition continues to work with them by forwarding leads and demographic/marketing information.
- The JTs Travel Plaza north of IHOP is under construction, but many folks may not be aware that a proposed hotel is in the works on the south end of the center as well. Work is also under way for a proposed retail center adjacent to Home Depot. The retail market in Hays is really getting a lot of interest!
- Plans are still in the works to level the former Ambassador hotel and redevelop those lots for retail. The Coalition is currently working with two developers interested in purchasing the property for redevelopment.
- Big Creek Crossing will start their Phase II renovations in September. They also have three Letters of Intent for new tenants. One retail chain is looking at 24,000 sf of space. This particular retailer is on the top fifteen list of requested store on the 2015 Retail Survey.



Don't forget, if you are hiring please register and post the opening(s) on our www.HaysHasJobs.com for FREE! Businesses that have posted openings have had tremendous response! If you would like to sign up, please visit the website to register

If you have any questions, please call Ernee at 785.628.3102 or email ernee@haysamerica.net

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