

Riggins, Nash ask Marshall council to endorse economic development plan

By Eric Crump. The Marshall Democrat-News: January 22, 2013.

The long-awaited economic development plan created over the past year by Marshall-Saline Development Corporation and Zimmer Real Estate Group is done.

MSDC Director Bill Riggins and Zimmer representative Troy Nash spoke at the Marshall City Council meeting Tuesday, Jan. 22, asking the council to endorse the nearly 200 page document.

The council approved a motion to have a resolution of recommendation drawn up with the intention of voting on it at its Monday, Feb. 4, meeting.

Council members were sent copies of the report, though not all were able to receive or open the attached document, so Riggins pledged to deliver print copies so council members will have an opportunity to review the plan.

Riggins and Nash will be asking other local government partners -- Slater, Sweet Springs and Saline County -- to endorse the plan in coming weeks.

Nash said plans are being made for a grand public unveiling of the plan starting Feb. 4.

"We intend to kick this plan off in a major way," he said.

Riggins explained the cause of the delayed release of the plan -- MSDC and Zimmer have been busy with projects that are beginning to boost the local economy, bringing in millions of dollars in tax credits and 235 new jobs.

"It's not that we've been fiddling around with the plan," he said.

According to Nash, the activity during the planning phase is actually part of the plan.

"We weren't interested in a plan that would sit on the shelf," he said. "We wanted a plan that would reflect the world we live in."

He noted that the plan is based on several assumptions that will drive future development:

--Globalization is here to stay,

--Embracing immigration is a key to success, and

--Improving education is the most important component.

Now that the plan is complete, Zimmer and Sterling Consulting will help with implementation through lobbying and grant writing. The two firms are under contract with MSDC.