



Thursday, April 25 - May 1, 2013

THE

DISPATCH POST

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Kansas City Welcomes Urban Rural Development Alliance



Kansas City welcomed its rural neighbors from Lafayette, Ray, and Saline County on April 19th at hometown favorite Papa Lew's Restaurant. Zimmer Real Estate Services, LC, along with ten Kansas City W/MBE firms sponsored the well attended event. Elected officials from Clinton, Higginsville, Lexington, Marshall, and Slater, Missouri packed the dining room for the private luncheon centered on a regional approach to economic development.

This comes on the heels of the

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Marshall City Council approving the Zimmer Economic plan for Marshall and Saline County. Zimmer Representative and former Kansas City Councilman, Troy Nash, developed the plan that suggests as goes Kansas City so goes the surrounding communities. Though Kansas City is Missouri's second most populated city, acres of farmland and pastures can be found just north and south of its core. During his presentation, Mayor Sly James stated, "Kansas City has always been agricultural", and made a strong correlation between the needs of urban and rural communities. Much of Kansas City's development issues depicted in the Mayor's speech are the same issues rural communities are struggling to find solutions.

The Urban/Rural Alliance provided an opportunity for the represented municipalities to further understand the necessity of working together as development dollars are critical to providing employment, attracting new business, and building sustainable communities. State and federal funding have decreased to some extent so the required tool for development is a more regional approach. The only way for these areas to grow and compete on a larger platform is to work together.

Having qualified W/MBE firms as co-sponsors of the luncheon demonstrated the availability of those qualified entities to perform on upcoming projects as well as Zimmer's commitment to diversity and fairness in contracting. W/MBE firms were able to make introductions and showcase some of Kansas City's best professional service and contracting talent. Where projects exist in the represented counties, W/MBE firms feel they have a chance to garner participation on those contracts. "This was a great opportunity to meet the decision makers and make our companies known," said Reynolds Electric CEO, Larry Reynolds. Having worked on the NNSA project in south Kansas City, Reynolds understands the quality of work that is required and the commitment necessary to complete projects right and on time.

Former Mayor of Kansas City, Kay Barnes was all smiles as she too welcomed the many distinguished guests and thanked them for attending. As the luncheon closed, many participants remarked they didn't know they had eaten soul food all of their lives. The jovial crowd applauded Papa Lew's founder and owner, Dorriess and Marvin Lyman for their hospitality and a delectable meal. Through local cooperation with big business and small business, Kansas City was able to highlight its goal of becoming One Kansas City.