

## Les Schwab Gives \$50,000 to Prineville/Crook County Economic Development Effort

by Bend Weekly News Sources

The Les Schwab Tire Centers Board of Directors announced recently that the company will provide a grant of \$50,000 to help support the continued economic health and prosperity of the Prineville and Crook County community. The funds will be earmarked for multi-year support of a new, local economic development program being developed by a private-public partnership that includes the Prineville/Crook County Chamber of Commerce, area businesses, Crook County, the City of Prineville and Economic Development for Central Oregon (EDCO). "Les Schwab Tire Centers has been headquartered in Prineville since the company was founded by Les Schwab in 1952," said Phil Wick, Chairman. "We announced plans to relocate to a new headquarters office in Bend, Oregon by fall, 2008. We understand that this relocation will have an impact on Prineville and this grant will be used to help strengthen economic development efforts for the local community." Les Schwab selected this initiative because the grant will effectively leverage private and public sector expertise to create business development and employment opportunities. The announcement by the company to shift 350 professional and administrative staff to a new headquarters outside the community also included retention of 800 employees within the company's extensive distribution facilities in Prineville. "We remain committed to Central Oregon and even with the corporate relocation to Bend, Prineville remains a large and important center for our operations," said Dick Borgman, Les Schwab Chief Executive Officer. Plans for the new Prineville/Crook County program were outlined by EDCO to business and public leaders in early December in a meeting organized by the Prineville-Crook County Chamber of Commerce and again at last night's City Council meeting. Modeled after a successful partnership launched three and a half years ago in Redmond, a full-time economic development professional in the community will be responsible for fostering business activity and helping to diversify the local economy. "In keeping with the Les Schwab credo of outstanding customer service, the new program will focus on producing tangible results as well as exceptional service and support for both new and existing employers," noted EDCO Executive Director Roger Lee. ABOUT LES SCHWAB TIRE CENTERS Les Schwab Tire Centers is one of the leading independent tire dealers in the United States with more than 7,700 employees in 410 locations throughout Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana, California, Nevada, Alaska and Utah. In 2006, Les Schwab's sales will exceed \$1.6 billion, making it one of Oregon's largest private or public corporations. ABOUT EDCO Economic Development for Central Oregon (EDCO) is a private non-profit corporation founded 25 years ago and dedicated to building a vibrant and thriving regional economy by attracting new investment and traded-sector jobs (manufacturing, professional, headquarters and high technology businesses) through marketing, recruitment and substantive assistance to existing companies. To view the Prineville-Crook County Economic Development concept papers, draft budget and job description, please click here.

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