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MOLALLA, ORE., REINVENTS LOCAL ECONOMY

*Northwest Polymers and Cencast, Inc. choose
new business park instead of relocating outside of Oregon*

MOLALLA, Ore. _ The historically timber-based economy of Molalla, Ore. has recently found a way to revitalize its local economy by transitioning an underutilized business park into an attractive site for two growing Oregon companies. Both Northwest Polymers and Cencast, Inc. have chosen Molalla's Four Corners Business Park as the site for future growth and operations.

Historically, Molalla has been known as a town that relied on timber as the foundation of its economy until the closure of multiple mills in the early 1990s. In 2006 it was designated an Enterprise Zone by the Oregon Economic and Community Development Department (OECD). This type of zone helps employers invest in new facilities and equipment if they add new jobs to the local economy.

"This community needed to stay competitive not only in Oregon but throughout the entire Northwest," said rural economic development coordinator for Clackamas County, Jamie Johnk. "Molalla took this business park and created a competitive, sought-after site by drastically improving the infrastructure, which has attracted businesses to locate and grow here."

Some of the infrastructure improvements included building new roads and basic support systems such as power and water lines. Without these improvements a business looking to move to the area would have had to invest significant capital to simply prepare the site for construction of a facility.

Northwest Polymers, a local leading processor and recycler of PVC, vinyl and other thermoplastic resins, chose the Molalla business park after considering a move out of Oregon entirely. In the end, Northwest Polymers chose to expand operations in Molalla because of commitment to the community and the city's willingness to be proactive and address the business needs of the company.

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“We considered several areas in Southwest Washington,” said Mark Shuholm, owner of Northwest Polymers. “Both economic development and city officials did an amazing job at creating the vital infrastructure needed to attract and sustain our business.”

The company will grow from a 10,000 to 45,000 square-foot facility this year and add an additional 15 employees over the next five years.

Cencast, Inc., a family-owned medical implant manufacturing company, decided to make the move from its 9,600 square-foot facility in Milwaukie, Ore., to a 24,000 square-foot facility in the new Molalla business park. The new location can be expanded to include an additional 6,000 square-feet to accommodate future growth. The expansion of current operations is expected to add roughly one employee each month for a total gain of about 14 new employees once the new facility is up to capacity.

“The move into Molalla was a perfect fit for us,” said General Manager Ken Hall Jr. of Cencast, Inc. “The new infrastructure was one of the biggest advantages that drew us in along with Molalla’s close access to Interstate 5 that put us within reach of both Portland and Salem.”

The Four Corners Business Park project was made possible due to the joint efforts from the City of Molalla, OECDD, the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and Clackamas County.

About Molalla, Ore.

Located in the foothills of the Cascade Range, Molalla is 13 miles from Interstate 5 allowing for easy access to both Portland and Salem. The diverse community offers full urban services, quality schools, an excellent airport, affordable housing and land costs in addition to the many recreational opportunities. Molalla has transitioned from the timber-based economy that was the initial growing force of the city, to a growing community of manufacturers and professional businesses.

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