IMPORTS ARE LIKE A THOUSAND FLASH FLOODS

David Holbert, President, Northwest Trade Adjustment Assistance Center

Please read the following article by David Holbert, the President of the Northwest Trade Adjustment Assistance Center. If your business could benefit from their services, please reach out to the CEDC.

The issue of trade competition and lost jobs is well discussed in the media. I work with small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) who are negatively affected by trade competition, what is often called “trade impact” in policy lingo. It’s a big issue. According to the U.S Trade Representative, the United States’ 30 million SMEs account for nearly two-thirds of net new private sector jobs in recent decades.

Please see IMPORTS, page 2.
For large companies or from a macro-economic perspective, import competition may seem like a rising tide – one that can be anticipated, prepared for, or proactively mitigated. For small and medium-sized businesses, not equipped with diverse product lines, resources, or change acumen, import competition feels more like a flash flood.

What is it like for those companies? When trade impact hits, sales drop off, often suddenly.

- Contract manufacturers build to specification for customers, often larger companies. For this group, trade impact could mean the loss of a major customer moving operations to a foreign country (and finding suppliers there), or simply an importer arriving on the scene with lower cost products.
- For a consumer products company, trade impact will probably first arrive with falling sales to the big retail chains since they are the most sensitive to supplier prices.
- For a commodity producer things are a little more predictable. There may be a change in currency valuation or the rise of a new industry in a foreign country. Regardless, these highly price sensitive markets will suddenly have a lower price option.

For small and medium sized companies, trade impact can be surprisingly direct and specific.

Here are a couple examples of what I’m talking about:

- A commercial products company makes a specialized tool. A couple of other U.S. and European companies make similar products with some parity between price and features. One year they are at the big industry trade show and see a product, similar to theirs, but priced about 40% lower. Three months later sales started slipping.
- A contract manufacturer that machines metal parts had gravitated away from stainless steel to titanium and built for several competitors in the same industry. Foreign producers had mastered stainless steel over the last decade. But as of a recent year, those producers finally mastered titanium as well. One by one, the manufacturer’s customers started buying imports. Once one did, it had a cost advantage, so the others had to go along also.

My role at the Northwest Trade Adjustment Assistance Center is to help small and medium-sized companies that are negatively impacted by trade competition through grants of up to $75,000. You can learn more about us at NWTAAC.org.

Do you qualify for assistance?

Are you directly impacted by imports? Are your sales down by 5% or more? Is your average employment down by 5% or more?

If you answered yes to all 3, you may qualify for help!
FEELING LUCKY IN DOWNTOWN LONGVIEW

Lindsey Cope, Community Engagement Director, President - Longview Downtowners

This year the Longview Downtowners had our 2nd Annual Shamrock Saturday. Shamrock Saturday is a similar model to American Express’ Small Business Saturday the day after Thanksgiving. Most of the stores, restaurant, bars and service providers held a sale, pop-up, raffle, promotion and/or partnered with another Downtown Longview business. Some great examples include Mill City Grill offering tastings of a tasty cider at Posh on Commerce, Classics & Oddities had amazing in-store deals and hosted their annual record show in the Bower’s Building outside of Gyros Gyros, Ashtown Brewing held a raffle and many others, such as The Vintage Square on Broadway, had sales, prizes and more!

Thank you to everyone who came to check out all that Downtown Longview has to offer on such a beautiful day, all our amazing partners for promoting and to our members for participating! Also, we would like to extend our gratitude to the Lower Columbia Contractor’s Association for partnering with us. They handed out shamrock cookies from our very own “The Original Kristi’s Boutique Bakery” at their Annual Home and Garden show the same day!

At the end of the Shamrock Saturday rainbow, the Longview Downtowners are approaching the end of our operational year. Our memberships and Board of Directors terms run from May 1 of the current year through April 30 of the following year. What does this mean? It means that we have elections coming up! If you are a member in good standing and are interested in becoming more involved in our organization, please reach out. You can learn more at our April meetings on April 11, 2019 at 8:00 AM at the Creekside Café and/or 3:00 PM upstairs at Mill City Grill. Our meetings are open to the public and to anyone who is interested in the promotion, preservation and development of Downtown Longview.

April showers bring May Flowers! We are thrilled to announce that our Longview Downtowner’s member and partner REAL LIVING: THE REAL ESTATE GROUP, has purchased ALL 31 hanging baskets for Downtown Longview! These gorgeous, professional, large baskets will be delivered in May. Next month, we will have more on the status of this project.

Be sure to keep up with us on Facebook @longviewdowntowners by “liking” and following our page! We are adding events weekly and will have upcoming opportunities this spring and summer including a clean-up day, shop local/pop up events, Bow Tie Bash/Great Race Day, Crafted Brew Festival, Squirrel Fest and more! Feel free to contact me if you have questions or want to get involved! Lindsey Cope – cope@cowlitzedc.com
COWLITZ ORGANIZATIONS RECOGNIZED FOR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

*Workforce Southwest WA Press Release*

Workforce Southwest Washington (WSW) presented its Excellence in Workforce Development Awards to four Cowlitz County organizations on March 13.

JH Kelly, the Longview School District and IBEW Local 48, in partnership with the Longview/Kelso Building and Construction Trades Council (LKBCTC), received the Excellence in Building Workforce Partnerships Award for their collaboration in developing a high school pre-apprenticeship program. Combining classroom instruction and hands-on construction projects with field trips to regional construction businesses, students learn trade-specific skills in fabrication, construction and manufacturing to prepare them for entry into a trades apprenticeship program.

"Business investment in developing and supporting partnerships to train the next generation of workers is key to the continued growth of our region," said WSW CEO Kevin Perkey. “The Longview School District pre-apprenticeship program is helping fill a critical skills gap in our region while expanding opportunities for local youth to prepare to enter an apprenticeship or the workforce."

North American Tarp, LLC received the Innovation in Workforce Development Award for its commitment to creating opportunities for jobs and career pathway exploration for individuals with barriers to employment, especially those who have been justice involved or are recovering from addiction.

CEO Logan Hornung believes in second chances and says his business is modeled around helping people who want help. Over the years, North American Tarp has employed many that have had run-ins with the legal system or are in a recovery program. Hornung is committed to helping his employees succeed and allows them flexibility to attend meetings or appointments to help them stay on track. He also mentors employees on soft skills such as arriving on time and attention to detail.

"I'm proud WSW's investments in WorkSource are enabling North American Tarp to hire local talent and invest in developing the skills of its employees," said WSW CEO Kevin Perkey. “Companies that employ individuals overcoming barriers are helping create a region where the opportunity for prosperity and growth exists for all.”

KELSO DOWNTOWN GETS UNDERWAY AFTER BECKY MCCRAY

*Lindsey Cope, Community Engagement Director*

Fresh off the heels of Becky McCray's visit, we organized our first Downtown Kelso Meeting for March 7, 2019. Ray Pyle and his team at Catlin Properties graciously hosted interested stakeholders in their newly renovated building in the heart of Downtown Kelso. Around their conference table and into their breakroom thirty community members ranging from real estate agents, business and building owners, city government and the Kelso Longview Chamber of Commerce met.

We did not come with a strict agenda for this first meeting, instead we asked what they wanted to address and what interest they had in reviving the Kelso Downtown Revitalization Association. The response was overwhelmingly positive and enlightening. Topics of discussion included: beautification, particularly with flower baskets, public art, awareness, events and way-finding.

An exciting event happening in Downtown Kelso is the 6th Annual Avery's Air-Cooled VW Show-N-Shine on May 18, 2019! This is the largest Non-Trophy VW Event in the Northwest. www.averysaircooled.com states “This is a fun-filled family-centric event featuring vintage VW vehicles; games, raffles, engine-blow, food, and after-show cruise”…"The show starts at 9:00 and at 2:00 we will be leaving for a cruise through town, more cars means more slug bugging for pedestrians!"

Our next Downtown Kelso meeting is scheduled for April 4th – time to be announced shortly. If you are interested in joining us, please reach out to Lindsey Cope at the Cowlitz Economic Development Council at cope@cowlitzedc.com

Kelso Washington

WWW.CEDC.COM
BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: RICH GUSHMAN, 2019 CEDC BOARD VICE CHAIR

Rich Gushman, President of Gibbs & Olson, serves as our 2019 Vice Chair. In addition to his role with the CEDC, Gushman is board chairman for a the LCC Foundation, and Three Rivers Christian School; board member for the Kelso Longview Chamber of Commerce; and a Longview Early Edition Rotary member and Immaculate Heart Catholic Church in Kelso. Gushman graduated from Kelso High School and attended Lower Columbia College before transferring to Washington State University, where he earned a degree in civil engineering.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Catlin Properties successfully manages nearly 700 doors and specializes in houses, apartments, duplexes and commercial properties.

Catlin Properties just purchased, renovated and moved to their new location at 110 S. 3rd Avenue in Kelso, WA. Ray and Lisa Pyle, along with their team, have been directly involved with our efforts in Kelso, as well as working with The Longview Downtowner’s to find space for pop-up events that highlight their available properties and small, home based businesses.

LOCAL REAL ESTATE OPPORTUNITIES

Multifamily land centrally located in downtown Castle Rock now available. Initial plans started for 32 (2 bed/1 bath) units in two buildings. Use what has been initially started or create your own vision.

Contact Woodford Commercial Real Estate
MEMBER NOTICES & EVENTS

16th Annual Clean-Up Day
April 27, 2019

Once again your Castle Rock Chamber will host the annual community clean up event. Projects vary for all age groups, families and organizations/businesses. Many exciting Castle Rock beautification/improvement projects are underway and your help is appreciated. Together we can celebrate the progress!

Free Lunch provided for all participants!

If you have any questions or your group would like to have a special project assignment prior to April 27, or if you know of a neighbor that could use some help with a project, please contact Carolyn 360.751.5172 or email carolyn@cowlitzriverdental.com with “CR Cleanup” in the subject line.

Registration begins 8 AM on Saturday, April 27, at Castle Rock Senior Center (222 Second Ave SW). There will be donuts, warm drinks, water, and assignments waiting for you.

Dress for the weather! This activity is RAIN or SHINE!

- Safety First! Bright Clothing to stay visible.
- Stay Hydrated! Water will be provided or bring your own.

Donations of canned goods for the Lions Club Food Bank are appreciated.

THANK YOU

The sun may not always shine in Castle Rock, but the people do!

Lower Columbia Professionals invites you to:

CAPS, CORKS & CUPCAKES
Thursday, April 18, 5 to 7 pm
21+ Event
Antidote Tap House
716 Triangle Shopping Center, Longview

Each $25 ticket includes 5 pairings of cupcakes with wine or beer. There are limited tickets available, so get them early at www.kelsolongviewchamber.org

All proceeds go to scholarships for Cowlitz County students pursuing higher education.

Follow us on Facebook! @cowlitzedc

WWW.CEDC.COM