

SHERMAN COUNTY ENTERPRISE ZONE

Sherman County was re-designated an Enterprise Zone by the Director of the Oregon Business Development Department in July of 2010 and is a continuation of the expiring zone that has been in effect since 1999.

Enterprise zones are discrete areas up to 12 square miles in size that are sponsored by one or more local governments. Various types are found throughout the world. Oregon's version has been in existence since the mid-1980s. Each zone designation lasts up to 11 years.

Enterprise zones are intended to offer property tax relief and other incentives to induce additional investment and employment by non-retail businesses in areas meeting certain measures of economic hardship. They have proven to be Oregon's key offering in the pursuit of business growth and expansion. Their effectiveness is due to a short-term but immediate benefit for the business project's cash flow. An Oregon Enterprise Zone exempts only new property that an eligible business firm might build or install in the enterprise zone at some future time.

These property tax exemptions are not available to just any business. Most commercial or retail type operations are ineligible. Rather, the primary beneficiaries of enterprise zone benefits are manufacturing and other more industrially oriented facilities serving other businesses. A qualifying investment entails the creation of new full time employment in the zone-greater of one new job or a 10-percent increase.

An enterprise zone exemption is temporary, usually lasting only three years, after which time the property induced by these incentives is available for assessment, possibly for decades.

The Sherman County Enterprise Zone consists of 3.1 square miles, with areas within the cities of Rufus, Wasco, Moro, Grass Valley, and Biggs Junction with the focus on the industrial sites.

For more information on this program contact Georgia Macnab in the Sherman County Planning Department at 541-565-3601.