

ORDINANCE NO. 429

AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING LOCAL TAX AND FEE RELIEF FOR QUALIFIED ENTERPRISE ZONE INVESTMENTS.

WHEREAS, the cities of St. Helens and Columbia City and Columbia County jointly agreed to a package of tax relief and regulatory flexibility upon designation of the St. Helens/Columbia City Enterprise Zone; and

WHEREAS, St. Helens/Columbia City was one of the first of ten Enterprise Zones designated statewide, effective March 11, 1986; and

WHEREAS, a property tax declining percentage exemption for new construction is available to eligible firms within the zone upon application to the assessor; and

WHEREAS, personal and corporate tax credits are available upon application to the State of Oregon Economic Development Department for preliminary approval as a "qualified investment;"

THE CITY OF COLUMBIA CITY DOES ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Policy. The City of Columbia City hereby finds and declares that the health, safety, and welfare of the people of this City are dependent upon the continued encouragement, development, growth, and expansion of employment, business, industry and commerce within this City. Therefore, it is the purpose of this ordinance to stimulate employment, business and industrial growth by providing local assistance to qualified businesses and industries consistent with the State of Oregon designation of the St. Helens/Columbia City Enterprise Zone.

Section 2. Qualified Investment. To qualify for local tax and regulatory relief, a new development and expansions within the City must have obtained preliminary approval of a qualified investment or certification of a qualified investment from the County Assessor of Columbia County in accordance with state law. [Amended by Ord. 99-543-0 10/7/99.]

Section 3. Eligible Enterprises. Non-retail businesses with an approved qualified investment qualify for tax and regulatory assistance under this ordinance if they are:

- (1) New businesses starting up; or
- (2) Existing businesses that increase the average number of full-time employees within the zone by at least ten (10) percent over the preceding year.

Section 4. Local Benefits. Eligible enterprises with a qualified investment qualify for the following local tax and fee benefits:

(1) All City permits associated with the qualified investments shall be reduced by 50 percent of the permit fee to be charged at the time the permit is issued.

(2) Business license fees shall be reduced by 50 percent for the first calendar year of business; 40 percent for the second calendar year of business; 30 percent for the third calendar year of business; 20 percent for the fourth calendar year of business; and 10 percent for the fifth calendar year of business after the new capital expenditures of the qualified investment.

(3) City sewer and water fees for unincorporated lands served by the City of Columbia City shall be based on inside rates.

Section 5. Regulatory Assistance. All City departments are hereby directed to cooperate to insure that eligible enterprises with qualified investments receive the following considerations:

(1) Processing of all permit applications for qualified investments ahead of all others.

(2) Submission of any ordinance with a direct economic impact on local businesses to the Port of St. Helens and St. Helens Chamber of Commerce for thirty days for review and comment prior to final adoption unless an emergency is identified and formally declared.

(3) Personal staff assistance for potential developers of qualified investments and cooperation with the staffs of St. Helens and Columbia County to facilitate the processing of any permits.

(4) Facilitating the extension of urban services into incorporated areas when the City's planning interests can be protected by a delayed annexation agreement.

Passed by the council and approved by the mayor August 7, 1986.