

Economic Development:

A postcard you may have received states: “Mr. White states that through his efforts the economic development budget was cut from \$300,000 to \$65,000. This is almost an 80% decrease in funding and a more feeble investment to strengthen the County’s economy. Common sense indicates that a cut this large will have negative results for our economic future. This far-reaching statement against planned economic development, and quality job creation is a strong signal that Mr. White and the county surrendered leadership of economic issues.”

The postcard is correct that the budget has been cut from ~\$300,000 to ~\$65,000, but such a cut is rather a statement *for* planned economic development and job creation, not against it. The cuts have been a **good thing and are producing results for the economy**. Here is how such a cut became possible.

In 2003 we budgeted \$282,997 to administer the County’s program for economic development. In 2004 we decided to try a pilot program with a private business, Economic Development Corporation of Utah, for \$25,000. Seeing the success of that program, we were confident that we should privatize the entire program with a business that specialized in corporate recruitment. Immediately the cost of administering this program dropped.

Utah County privatized economic development activities in 2005, as did the State of Utah under Governor Huntsman in 2006. Utah County has contracted with Economic Development Corporation of Utah, which is also the State of Utah’s new private contractor for Economic Development. Because the state is also working with this new contractor, they are paying half of our costs. **This year our costs dropped from \$129,000 to \$65,000!**

Good news:

The Economic Development Corporation of Utah has recently landed a project in Spanish Fork for a nutraceutical company which will employ 300-400 people. Our county department had not developed a significant project of this nature in 2003 or 2004, and I feel we are getting better results for **much less money**. Increases in efficiency mean we have more money to allocate to other important programs like law enforcement.