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Kalispell business expands to Glacier Rail Park

by Vanessa Perez
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Glacier Rail Park (Photo: NBC Montana)

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KALISPELL, Mont. — The Core and Rail Redevelopment project is currently underway in the Flathead. The project aims to promote local business expansion and attract new rail-served manufacturers to the Flathead through the Glacier Rail Park.





"It's been really fast. I don't think anybody would have even dreamed that it would've happened

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Kalispell," Montana West Economic Development representative Christy Dawson Cummings said.

CHS and Northwest Drywall have operated out of the park since 2018.

The Glacier Rail project started to relocate downtown businesses that relied on rail service. It frees up formerly industrial properties in downtown for redevelopment.

It's a partnership between Flathead County Economic Development Authority and the city of Kalispell. Funds from the Authority and TIGER grant made the Glacier Rail Park possible.

Officials say getting the tracks taken out has been a dream for the downtown area.

"The build-out of the Parkline Trail is spurring a lot of development downtown. There is going to be more housing -- which is really needed -- retail and office space within walking distance to local shops and restaurants," Cummings said.


Northern Plastics is a local manufacturing company and says getting their material trucked to the area is costly.


"By bringing in on rail we can save a fairly large percentage on our cost of raw materials, and that just makes a huge difference on manufacturing," Northern Plastics president Mark Hufstetler said.

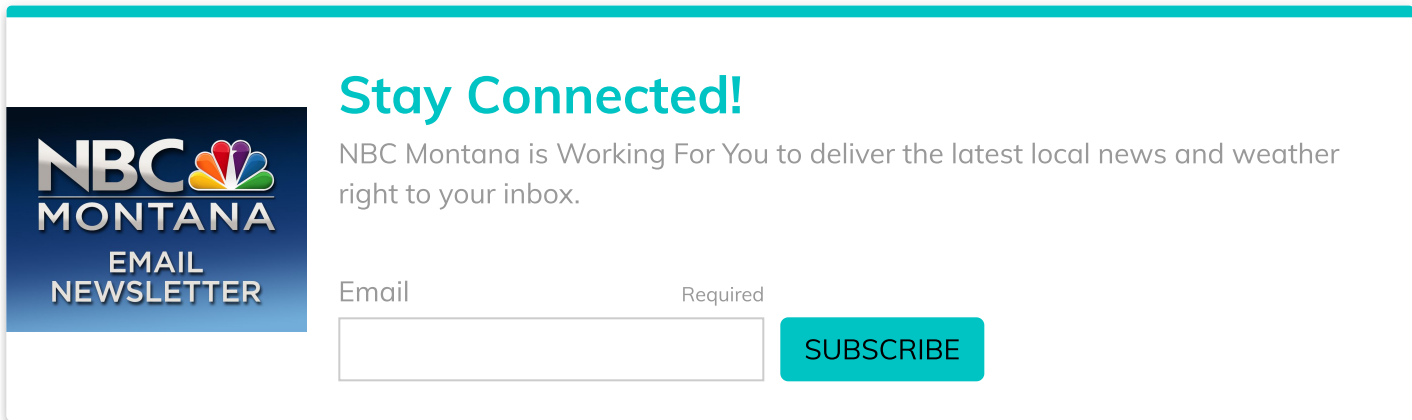
Hufstetler added they'd like to start building their new facility soon, but they are watching steel prices, which are high right now.

"We're going to build as soon as possible; we've already grown beyond the walls of the current facility that we're just bursting at the seams," Hufstetler said.




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