



“The rail is coming through more and more and they are starting to back them up into the desert because there is a bottleneck here,” Dougherty said. “Kingman has two lines that run through the city and two spurs, which are operated by Patriot Rail and are out at the airport. Our infrastructure is well developed and it to the point where it is getting stressed. You are looking at 125 trains a day now and about 1200 truck trips to the airport. It’s pretty dynamic out there.”

Back in the Dakotas, Belle Fourche is landlocked so quick access to barge isn’t a realistic option. The rail however, is. The city of Belle Fourche has committed to a multi-million dollar rail industrial park to ensure future distribution option for the region’s growing economy, which is where Permian Tank set up shop. Stalder said there is over \$3 million invested into infrastructure and the rail spur is continuing to be developed.

“That transload and spur will serve that industrial park very well,” Stalder said. “In western South Dakota and kinda this tri-state area, that’s a mechanism serve not only the people in the rail park but trucking businesses all over to on load and offload product for folks that want to use the rail as a more economical way to transport their goods either in or out of our area.”

Stalder said the rail spur has garnered the interest from many people looking to service oil and gas as well as other industries.

“I would say over the past 6 months 90-95 percent of all our inquiries we non oil related. From retail to manufacturing to agriculture. They are across the board,” Stalder said.

Permian Tank, Black Hills Fiberglass and Pipeline Plastics have all opened since the Bakken boom began several years ago. Stadler added Pipeline Plastics and Black Hills Fiberglass can and do some business in the water industry, but oil is their primary customer. Outside of those companies, Stalder doesn’t see as much interest from Big Oil, rather the supporting cast.

“If we can benefit from any of the oil plays that surround us with businesses, industries or manufacturing or anything related to the oil fields, we’d love to be that,” Stalder said. “But I appreciate that we can be diversified here and still accommodate the shale plays like the Bakken or the Green River. Yet not be so narrowly focused that it is all oil related.”

Like Belle Fourche, Kingman was considered one of those fringe towns for years, if not decades. With energy companies streamlining and towns taking time to develop for the next shale rush, those supporting communities have a real opportunity for growth. Dougherty understands the potential supporting towns can give and was able to sum up what is happening across small town USA.

“For years our manufacturing was considered a diamond in the rough,” Dougherty said. “Well we have been polishing that diamond now for a little bit and it is starting to shine. Investors and major companies are now starting to see our diamond shine.”



Photo: Belle Fourche mayor Gary Hendrickson (right) and economic development consultant Jim Doolittle (left) pose in front of the multimillion dollar industrial rail park. Photo by Jason Spiess