Online News

April

- April 5: MEDA Legislative Committee Call 7am
- April 7: MMEC Series: Maximize Business Value
- April 9: Lodging for MEDA Conference Deadline
- April 12: MEDA Legislative Committee Call 7am
- April 13: RTA Working Group Call 9am
- April 19: MEDA Legislative Committee Call 7am
- April 19: Big Sky Security Conference
- April 20: Early Registration End for MEDA
- April 26: MEDA Legislative Committee Call 7am
- April 26: MDOC/MEDA Opportunity Call 10:30am

May

- May 2-3: MEDA Spring Conference
- May 11: RTA Working Group Call
- May 15-17: National SBIR Conference
- May 26: MEDA Rick Jones Scholarship Deadline
- May 31: MDOC/MEDA Opportunity Call

SBDC Training Calendar
MNA Training Calendar
Register for Innovate MT Symposium
Sponsor Innovate MT Symposium

Agenda and Registration

CHARTING THE COURSE IN THE WINDS OF CHANGE

JOIN US IN GREAT FALLS MAY 2 – 3
There is nothing quite like a MEDA conference; you will not want to miss all that is planned for you.
Pre-Conference Professional Development Training: **Caution! Construction Zone! Infrastructure Planning and Financing “Roads, Bridges, Water & Sewer Improvement.** Bring your infrastructure challenges to this work table approach to learning.

- Not one, but TWO tours!
- Learning opportunities on topics such as: Efficient Social Media, TIFs, Legislative Outcomes, Table Talks
- MEDA Annual Membership Meeting
- Winds of Change from Washington, DC Agenda and Registration – Lodging ends April 10th; Early Bird Rate ends April 21

**MEDA MEMBERSHIP UPDATE**
Our new MDOC State Director Pam Haxby-Cote joined the MDOC/MEDA Opportunity Call and shared her contact information: email: pam.haxbycote@mt.gov Phone: 406.841.2745. Full speed ahead, Pam! New members: Tracy Baker is the new Executive Director for Miles City Area Economic Development; Dan Iverson is the Public Information Officer for MDOC; John Podolinsky is the Small Business Ombudsman, DEQ Energy Office, and Jan Stoddard is the Bureau Chief, Office of Trade and International Relations. Welcome to all.

**OPPORTUNITY CALL –**
Next one is set for April 26th; 10:30am

Due to the Legislative Session, this conference call was postponed for several months. It was great to once again hold the call and hear program updates from MDOC and learn of projects from Economic Development Organizations and our partners out in the field. Meeting notes.

**MEDA BOARD UPDATE – Interested in joining the board?**
There is one opening on the MEDA Board. There are nine permanent seats on the MEDA Board and 11 rotating seats. If you are an engaged and active member of MEDA and would like to serve a two year term, please send your information to Tracy McIntyre, Nominating Committee Chair, by Noon, April 12th.

**MEDA WORKING GROUPS UPDATE**
- A re-start of the MEDA Tourism and Recreation Working Group took place in March thanks to Dax Schieffer, Voices of Montana Tourism. Dax wants to provide an opportunity to re-engage the working group and invite others to join the efforts to recognize the key role tourism can play in Montana’s economic development and in Montana’s communities. Notes from the call.
- **Going to Quarterly Calls - MEDA RLF Working Group** – This working group is switching its call schedule to quarterly meetings; June 6th, 10am, is the next call. If you work with Revolving Loan Funds you will want to participate in this working group as participants discuss, learn and share their day-to-day tasks with RLFs. Notes
- **MEDA Resource Team Assessment Working Group** – This working group will meet on April 13th, 9am, with guest Lorie Higgins, University of Idaho, sharing about the three state Resource Team Assessment research grant. Learn more about MEDA’s assessments here.

**MEDA Rick Jones Memorial SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE**
Kim Morisaki is the 1st Quarter Winner for a Rick Jones Memorial Scholarship from MEDA. Anne Boothe is now accepting 2nd Quarter applications. Deadline for this quarter: Friday, May 26th. For more information visit: Criteria and Application
MEDA RESOURCE TEAM ASSESSMENTS

Fort Benton – Wow! There were so many people at the Ft. Benton Return Town Meeting that we had to rob a bank of its chairs! The team returned March 6th and assisted the community in identifying projects, setting priorities, and forming working groups to get things done. Team members included: Anne Boothe, Alyssa Townsend, Brian Obert, Craig Carlson, and Cheryl Ulmer. Bear Paw Development Corporation and Triangle Communications are working with local leadership to ensure long term outcomes.

Resource Teams Pending: Philipsburg, Chinook, and Poplar are making plans for a resource team visit. More information will be available soon.

MEDA COMMITTEE UPDATES

- MEDA Scholarship and Professional Development Committee – Thanks for taking the survey so this committee could plan to accommodate your training needs. According to the results, the number one training need was to learn how to plan and fund infrastructure projects. Be sure to register for the pre-conference workshop and join us! [MEDA Spring Conference]

- MEDA Legislative Committee – Under the leadership of Rick Edwards, the hard working MEDA Legislative Committee continues to meet each Wednesday at 7am. All MEDA members are encouraged to reach out to their area legislators and inform them of the value of Montana’s key economic development tools and programs. Everyone is welcome to join the calls. [Resources]

Highlights for March 2017

18 RECORDED VISITS IN MARCH!
The BEAR Google Form Database was the recipient of 18 BEAR Team visits in March. Great work!
- Flathead County/Kalispell: Mora McCarthy led the way with 8 visits; Kim Morisaki with 1
- Gallatin County/Bozeman: Warren Vaughan 7 visits
- Additional visits recorded:
  - Dawson Count/Glendive: Kathy McLane
  - Lake County/Polson: Lynn Lagerquist, Kristopher Schock, and John Winegart.
Interested in reviving, changing up your BEAR Team? Contact the BEAR office (406.563.5259) and check out this website for training events: [http://www.brei.org/upcoming-events.html](http://www.brei.org/upcoming-events.html)

**TOOLS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOU**
Check out the information below to learn of new tools and opportunities for you as you work in the field of Economic Development.

- Have a hard time explaining to others what you do in the field of Economic Development? Check out this [great video](http://www.brei.org/upcoming-events.html) from Central Oregon.

  **Video Recording Now Available from Aspen Institute Event on Local Innovation and Rural Economies**

- Last week, the [Aspen Institute](http://www.brei.org/upcoming-events.html) hosted “Local Innovation Strengthening Rural Economies,” a panel discussion featuring innovators – business owners, intermediary partners, and investors – active in a variety of rural economies in the United States. Rural manufacturing, rural wood products, and rural investment capital were all discussed. Click here to watch a recording of the event.

- Today, the Economic Development Research Partners (EDRP - IEDC’s think tank) will release their new report, "Organizing for Success: Regional Economic Development". The report will be released during the IEDC 2017 Leadership Summit in Jacksonville, Florida.

**GRANT OPPORTUNITIES**

- Check out the updated website from MSU Extension and their great list of grants! [http://msucommunityresources.org/GrantOpportunities.html](http://msucommunityresources.org/GrantOpportunities.html)

- MEDA is a member of [GrantStation](http://www.brei.org/upcoming-events.html). Email gloria if you would like the username and password.

- Let's get more from Montana: Applications Requested for Innovative Partner Projects
On Jan. 12, 2017, NRCS invited potential conservation partners to submit project applications for fiscal year (FY) 2018 federal funding through RCPP. **Project pre-applications are due on or before April 21, 2017.**

Through this fourth RCPP Announcement for Program Funding (APF), NRCS will award up to $252 million dollars to locally driven, public-private partnerships that improve the nation’s water quality, combat drought, enhance soil health, support wildlife habitat and protect agricultural viability. Applicants must match or exceed the federal award with private or local funds. **Read the press release about the RCPP APF.**