



Online News 2020



Feb 1: MEDA Q1 Scholarship Deadline
Feb 4: MEDA Membership Call 10:30am
Feb 4: 9:30am – Noon [W2ASACT](#) Meeting
Feb 5: MEDA Nominating Committee Call 3:00pm
Feb 5: USDA/RD [ReConnect Workshop](#)
Feb 6: Beginners Guide to SEO; [Free Webinar](#)
Feb 6: MEDA OZ Working Group Call 2:00pm
Feb 10-13: MACo [Midwinter Conference](#)
Feb 11-27: [MTIP NIH Proposal Lab begins](#)
Feb 12: [CEDS and Opportunity Zones](#)
Feb 17: MEDA Community Review Applications Due
Feb 20: Community Review Working Group Call 9am

[Outlook Seminars Schedule Feb – March 2020](#)

[MT Women's Biz Center](#)
[SBDC Training Calendar](#)
[MNA Training Calendar](#)
[MMEC Training Calendar](#)
[MDOC Tourism Wednesday Webinars](#)



March 13-14: [Made in MT Tradeshow](#)
March 15-18: [NADO and DDAA Washington Conf](#)
March 18: SBDC Day
March 19: [2020 Leadership Summit, Sidney](#)

A look ahead:

April 1: Census Day

April 26 – 28 [Governor's Conference on Tourism and Recreation](#), Billings

April 28 – 30 [MT Healthy Communities Conference](#), Helena

May 21 MT Opportunity Zone Conference, Blgs

May 28 – 29 MEDA Spring Conference

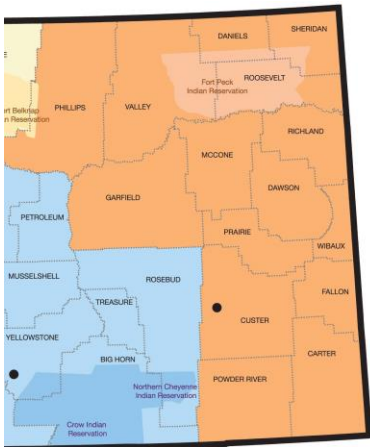
June 15 – 17 [MT Housing Conference](#)



TOP 4 ANNOUNCEMENTS – Don't Miss!

1. May 28 – 29 is the new date for the MEDA Spring Conference, in Helena.
2. Deadline to apply for a spring Community Review is Feb. 17th
3. NextGen project focus in February: MACo and Central Montana
4. You should have received your MEDA dues invoice via mail; thanks for your support!

MONTANA'S NEXTGEN: EASTERN MONTANA JOURNEY



Eastern Montana colleagues set the pace for the rest of the state. The week of January 20th, TIP Strategies consultants Jeff Marcell and Elizabeth Scott were given a grand tour of Eastern Montana that contained many listening sessions, an airplane hop or two, and multiple car trips.



Jeff and Elizabeth reported out to the NextGen Steering Committee that the trip was everything they had hoped for: visiting with community members, key officials, business representatives, economic developers, chamber members, farmers and ranchers, and much more. The trip started in Billings, then Elizabeth flew to Wolf Point while Jeff was driven to the Miles City/Glendive area. Special thanks to our MEDA colleagues and partners to make arrangements and take the time to make this visit a success.

Next up (tentative schedule): February 10 – 14, Elizabeth in Central Montana; February 24 – 27, Jeff in Butte, Bozeman, Dillon area; March 16 – 19, Western Montana area; March 31 – April 1, Elizabeth in Helena.

MEDA SPRING CONFERENCE – MUCH MORE THAN A CONFERENCE!

The MEDA Spring Conference will be less of a conference and more of a strategic planning session to take the MEDA and Montana Chamber Foundation “NextGen” report and turn it into an action plan. In addition to MEDA colleagues, partners from across Montana’s economic sectors will be encouraged to attend. The event will be held on the campus of Carroll College, May 28th and 29th. Registration will be available soon.







Carroll College, Helena, MT

MEDA MEMBERSHIP – INVOICES IN THE MAIL

The MEDA Board cast a historic vote last year and made way for sponsoring membership options. You can, of course, still be a MEDA member as an individual. You should have received a snail-mailed invoice by now; just call the MEDA office with any questions at 406.563.5259.

Many thanks to our first sponsors:

Gold	Bronze
	  

MEDA WORKING GROUPS UPDATE

All partners, including MEDA Members and Non-Members, are welcome to join a Working Group.

- **Wind Projects, Anyone?** - Check out the notes from the previous meeting and other resources [here](#). If you are interested in learning/sharing about wind projects in Montana, plan to join the group.
- **MEDA Community Review Working Group** - This [working group](#) is all about assisting with MEDA's Community Review process and resources. The next meeting is set for February 20th at 9am. [Notes from the call](#). **Note the new deadline for applications - to hold a Community Review: February 17th!**
- **MEDA Opportunity Zone Working Group** – The first meeting of this Working Group is set for February 6th, at 2pm. Check out the resources [here](#).
- **MEDA [Remote Work](#) Working Group** – Review [the previous minutes here](#) and check out the interesting [Grow Remote](#) website.

MEDA SCHOLARSHIPS 2020 – Q2 ROUND NOW OPEN

The First Quarter Round for MEDA Rick Jones Memorial Scholarship has closed, but Quarter 2 Round is now open. Deadline: May 1st. [Apply today](#).



DON'T MISS ONE PERSON

Census 2020 postcards will start hitting Montana mailboxes in mid-March. Join in your local Complete Count Committee – [check out the map](#) to find yours.

Anaconda CCC, pictured right, has over 30 members dedicated to using his/her network to make sure everyone in Anaconda-Deer Lodge County is counted.



Montana's first Census 2020 public service announcement started airing on broadcast television and radio stations statewide this week. Check out all of the [resources for your use here](#).

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.

- ⇒ [Ways to End Soul Sucking Meetings](#) – for your reading pleasure.
- ⇒ [IEDC Economic Development Marketing and Attraction Course, Feb 27-28, Baltimore, MD](#)
- ⇒ Montana has many business assistance tools [here](#). **Want to receive updates from the Department of Commerce? Subscribe to receive [email updates here](#).**
- ⇒ **February 12 Webinar to Discuss Updated CEDS Content Guidelines to Incorporate Opportunity Zones**



JOIN US
FOR AN UPCOMING WEBINAR

In January 2020, the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) updated its [Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies \(CEDS\) Content Guidelines](#) to help communities across America maximize their ability to attract investment to [Opportunity Zones](#). These [new recommendations](#) outline how communities can further promote the economic

attractiveness of their region by emphasizing Opportunity Zones as key investment-ready locations. The inherently regional focus of the CEDS provides a unique platform to capture and promote the advantages of Opportunity Zone communities. **February 12 from 2 p.m. – 3 p.m. ET** for a [webinar](#) to learn more about the updated Guidelines and for a live demonstration of the new [USA Opportunity Zones Tool](#), which can provide support to Economic Development Districts as well as local economic and community developers by helping them integrate local investment information with publicly supported projects in or near zones. Click [here](#) to register and submit your questions in advance of the webinar.

- ⇒ Please join **Communities in Action** in the 2020 Leadership Summit, sponsored by Stockman Bank and Richland County, hosted at the Richland County Event Center on March 19, from 1 to 6 p.m. The goal of the 2020 Leadership Summit is to grow social capital by investing in the community's leadership. The 2020 Leadership Summit is free and open to the public.

Opportunities such as these are rare in eastern Montana, be sure to take advantage.

[Register](#)

- ⇒ **Destination Development Webinars**

The Destination Development Association has a plethora of resources to inspire and empower local stakeholders and local organizations with their efforts to becoming vibrant, sustainable, and thriving destinations that will attract new investment, are fantastic places to live, and that visitors will gravitate to every chance they get. As a courtesy to our tourism partners, the Tourism Grant Program is happy to host a Wednesday Webinar Series on the 2nd Wednesday of each month. Please register [here](#) if your entity or organization is interested in community efforts to become a vibrant, sustainable, and thriving destination.



**Small Business
Webinar Series 2020**

**A Beginner's Guide to
SEO: Five Tips to Get
Found Online**


**Thursday, February 6th, 2020
11 AM, MST**

What is SEO and why does it matter? SEO stands for search engine optimization and is the process of getting engines to recognize your site as one worth serving up. This presentation will cover some basics of SEO and give you five actionable steps to help your business get found online.

Register at
<https://mtabdc.ecenterdirect.com/events/4434>


Hear experts provide an overview of small business development topics and phone in or type or chat questions or comments. We will follow-up with requests for additional information. All webinars are **free and open the public at 11 AM** (for 30 min) and will be recorded and archived.


- See the webinar live or access the recorded webinar and see additional resources at <http://www.mtsucommunitydevelopment.org/smallbusiness.html>
- For questions, email commdev@montana.edu




Rich Gannon
SBDC Rural Business Advisor
Great Falls Development Authority
www.greatfallsmontana.org

Webinar Series Sponsors













Additional Support









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February Small Business Webinar Series, February 6th

[Register Here](#)

GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

- ⇒ Check out the updated website from **MSU Extension** and their great list of grants!
<http://msucommunityresources.org/GrantOpportunities.html>
- ⇒ MEDA is a member of [GrantStation](#). Email [gloria](#) if you would like the username and password.



- ⇒ The next application deadline for funding through the BSTF Job Creation Grant Program is March 11, 2020. For application guidance or further information, contact Annmarie Robinson at 406.841.2250. For more information, visit MARKETMT.COM/BSTF
- ⇒ ExportMontana has grant dollars available to help companies translate promotional materials into foreign languages. [Learn more an apply here.](#)

- ⇒ Special Event Grant Application Cycle Opens Feb. 1
A special application cycle of [tourism event grants](#) will open on Feb. 1. The grant awards of \$5,000-\$25,000 are to support an event being held in Montana before June 30, 2021. The purpose of this grant is to attract non-resident or out-of-area resident visitors to the event, enhancing attendance and increasing visitor-generated revenues. To prepare for this special application cycle for events only, attend the workshop on **Wednesday, February 5 at 10:00 a.m.** The workshop will include an overview of the program, who is eligible, what types of events qualify, and a timeline of the application cycle. [Register here for the workshop](#). Awards will be based on the number of total applications received, in addition to a review and evaluation process led by Montana Department of Commerce staff and a member of the Tourism Advisory Council. [See the 2019 event grant recipients here](#).

- ⇒ *New Montana Historic Preservation Grant Program Accepting Applications* The Montana Department of Commerce is now accepting applications for the Montana Historic Preservation Grant Program. The new grant program is designed to support the preservation of historical sites, societies and museums in Montana. With awards of up to \$500,000 for each eligible grant recipient, the funding will be used to improve historical sites, historical societies or history museums in Montana. **Applications are due by Feb. 28, 2020.** Grant recipients will be determined by the Montana Legislature during the 2021 legislative session.

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- ⇒ **Tribal Resilience Program**
The Bureau of Indian Affairs provides federal-wide resources to Tribes to build capacity and resilience through leadership engagement, delivery of data and tools, training and tribal capacity building. **Proposal Deadline: March 2, 2020**



- ⇒ Agriculture Innovation Center grants are available from USDA. [Learn more and apply here](#).

WEBINAR: Applying for Rural Broadband Funding Through the USDA's ReConnect Program

- ⇒ [RSVP Now](#) The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will begin taking applications this Friday, January 31 for the second round of \$550 million in ReConnect Program loan and grant funding. That window closes on Monday, March 16. Connected Nation wants to help you understand how YOUR area can leverage this program to connect more families, businesses, and communities. Date for webinar: Wednesday, February 5th.

Montana Innovation Partnership

powered by TechLink

Program and Business Spotlight

The Montana Innovation Partnership (MTIP) powered by MSU TechLink Center promotes technology-based economic development in the state through education and expert technical assistance for companies seeking seed funding through the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs. Funded in part through a Federal and State Technology Partnership (FAST) grant from the U. S. Small Business Administration, MTIP provides no-cost education, one-on-one consulting, proposal reviews, market research, commercialization planning, and collaboration with other technology-based economic development partners across Montana. Contact Ann Peterson at ann.peterson@montana.edu for more information.



Register Now!



Expesicor, a privately-held company based in Kalispell, Montana is focused on preventing, treating, and curing neurological disorders. Expesicor received professional proposal review services from MTIP prior to submitting a fast-track NIH SBIR proposal to further develop its KaL model of neurodegeneration and epilepsy. NIH awarded Expesicor this three-year fast-track SBIR grant in fall 2019. Expesicor has also been granted an MTIP FAST microgrant to help them with costs related to preliminary experiments for another technology which may receive SBIR funding.



We're In This Together

February 2020