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**Press Release**  
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**Montana Economic Developers Association**  
Broadband Themes for Connecting Montana

Anaconda, MT- In June of 2020, the Montana Economic Developers Association (MEDA) created a diverse working group to collaborate on finding working solutions for the broadband connectivity. The working group is composed of economic developers, cooperatives and cooperative associations, community leaders, service providers, and state agencies. It was the intent of this group to develop a series of key themes to address with Montana Legislation.

“COVID-19 brought to the forefront that broadband connectivity is no longer a commodity but is essential infrastructure for the State of Montana” said Committee Chair Tracy McIntyre, Executive Director of the Montana Cooperative Development Center and MEDA Board member. “Broadband is connecting all parts of our lives from work to family connections. We need to change the narrative that Montana’s broadband is 50<sup>th</sup> in the Nation to Montana is a connected State with areas showcasing state-of-the-art broadband and a plan to address areas that are under or unserved.”

The Committee, with the MEDA Board’s support drafted and released a series of key themes:

- 1) Mapping Coordination and Integration
- 2) Defining Sufficient Level of Connectivity
- 3) Encouraging investment in high-performance broadband by providers in unserved and underserved locations with a series of policy elements to be considered.
- 4) Focus on closing Montana’s Digital Divide

To learn more about the MEDA’s broadband committee and work visit <https://www.medamembers.org/mt-next-generation-of-tools/broadband-committee>.

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