

**MEDA SUMMER CONFERENCE 2021 DAY 2 SMALL GROUP REPORT OUTS**

**Sheet 1:**

<b>Top Priorities:</b>	<b>Specific Next Steps Recommended:</b>
<b>Additional Professional Services</b>	<b>See priorities.</b>
<b>Who? Executive Director</b>	<b>Bring up the conversation at the MEDA Membership Committee meeting</b>
<b>Funding Stability</b>	<b>Create a value proposition for MEDA</b>
<b>Marketing MEDA/ Awareness</b>	<b>Communication/Marketing Committee to create/identify the streamlined message for "What is MEDA"</b>
<b>Creating MEDA Pillars (might be in the study)</b>	<b>Look into nonprofit funding sources for capacity building within MEDA.</b>

**Sheet 2:**

<b>Top Priorities:</b>	<b>Specific Next Steps Recommended:</b>
<b>1. Define core economic development principles. Identify those opportunities and find direction and structure to accomplish goals.</b>	<b>Call the experts on specific issues (workforce housing, childcare) and come along their efforts.</b>
<b>2. Attraction, retention (excellence and efficiencies) , entrepreneurship, workforce housing, childcare</b>	<b>Define legislative solutions that could be implemented in 2023. Starts tomorrow.</b>
<b>3. Go-to hub for economic development, conveners of groups.</b>	<b>Explore opportunities for executive director position at MEDA coupled with a communications director.</b>
<b>4. Experts on how programs are delivered.</b>	

**Sheet 3:**

<b>Top Priorities:</b>	<b>Specific Next Steps Recommended:</b>
<b>1. Collaboration and Connection. Helping members help each other and better serve communities. Forging rural and urban connections. Work with groups focused on housing, childcare, broadband, etc.</b>	<b>Have a full time executive director or lobbyist.</b>  <b>Leverage local MEDA members for coordinated legislative outreach in their region/community.</b>
<b>2. Elevate MEDA's role as a leader in state economic development. Draft strategic goals, have a seat at the table with leaders, lobby the legislature for priorities.</b>	
<b>3. Build economic development programs that support innovation, entrepreneurship, and growth industries. Create a feedback mechanism. Work with program coordinators to update.</b>	

Sheet 4:

Top Priorities:	Specific Next Steps Recommended:
Soft skills – employability – all levels.	Understand what exists today and identify gaps.
Automation to address workforce shortages – program availability; able to incentivize businesses to automate.	Determine how to fill the gaps through programs and processes.
Job flexibility and remote work opportunities.	MEDA would have to consider federal legislation as well as state.
Leverage existing and create programs to promote VISAs (Federal)	

Sheet 5:

Top Priorities:	Specific Next Steps Recommended:
Pull weight in the organization	MEDA Lobbyist and/or Executive Director
Partner with organizations	Members pony up
Administrative infrastructure	Invite MLCT and MACo and other statewide organizations
Commit to one issue	Workforce education game plan

Sheet 6:

Top Priorities:	Specific Next Steps Recommended:
Three Core Beliefs: (within each have very specific and clear message and strategies.)	Determine key initiatives under each goal. For example, state Goal the list priorities, strategies, and tactics.
1. Build communities – have very set priorities within that umbrella – i.e., broadband, placemaking, downtown, etc.	
2. Strengthen businesses and entrepreneurship – legislative component to influence outcomes	
3. Workforce – human component.	

Sheet 7:

Top Priorities:	Specific Next Steps Recommended:
1. Remember our mission <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Membership driven</li> <li>• Connector, educator, informative, networkers, professional development</li> </ul>	MEDA is the grease, not the glue. MEDA’s mission is not political engagement, but education, professional development, networking, etc. Uncomfortable with political/lobbyist stance. Maybe it okay to be an inch deep and a mile wide.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An organization to serve economic developers not to be the economic development organization.</li> <li>• Liaisons to keep fingers on the pulse on all key areas (i.e., workforce, childcare, business attraction, infrastructure, broadband, etc.) with partners and members and report to all members.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A hub of informative connector role between members, partners, agencies and legislature.</li> <li>• Role of MEDA vs Individual members – get MEDA back to a membership organization.</li> <li>• Quantifying success of economic development = job creation?????</li> <li>• Align with partners and identify who is driving when we are supporting, i.e. workforce lead by Chamber, childcare led by DPPHS, etc.</li> <li>• Determine when we are the head, when we are supporter</li> <li>• We need to educate in one voice to promote our collective voices.</li> <li>• Determine our focus = collaborate as the “private” with the “public” bring our knowledge forward, our community knowing.</li> <li>• MEDA marketing – telling our story, what we do, be engaged.</li> </ul>
	<p>Determine the pillars of MEDA as a statewide organization. What is our focus? Economic development pillars.</p>
	<p>Communities are in the best place to create weighted priorities, action plan, milestones, leads and timeline.</p>

Sheet 8:

Top Priorities:	Specific Next Steps Recommended:
Communication	Delegate specific people for specific tasks
Collaboration *	Strengthen public/private relationships
Industry driven strategies *	Create working relationships with timelines for projects.
* Directory/excel spreadsheet detailing strengths of each member	Designated liaisons from MEDA to other associations, MDOC, and departments.
	Economic development program review for state of Montana programs.
	Work with site selector program

Sheet 9:

Top Priorities:	Specific Next Steps Recommended:
<p>Metrics to inform on economic development programs/state loan programs. To support: Housing/workforce housing (finding the \$, legislation, land trust, state support program subdivision development, workforce alignment, etc.)</p>	<p>Need a MEDA director/manager Grow the membership Communications – marketing group to share expertise.</p>
<p>Realize partnerships and define the value MEDA provides.</p>	

Sheet 10:

Top Priorities:	Specific Next Steps Recommended:
<p>Develop a unified message from and for MEDA:</p>	<p><b>How:</b> Develop unified message to use for communications and marketing to public and policymakers.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Vision (why): economically strong communities across Montana</b></li> </ul>	<p>Assess the organization of MEDA’s staff and capacity to tackle priorities listed above – strategist, government relations, delegator, avenger.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Mission (what):</b> Drive new quality job growth Attract new private investment Attract and retain workforce Invest in entrepreneurship</li> </ul>	<p><b>When:</b> Immediately begin steps on “how” to have unified comprehensive message and strategy for the 2023 session. <b>Where:</b> Montana!</p>