



Online News



Sept 5: MDOC [Grant Webinar](#) 10:00am
Sept 5: Small Business Webinar: [Innovation](#)
Sept 11 – [Brownfields Best Practices](#), Lewistown
Sept 12 - 13: [MEDA Fall Conference, Lewistown](#)
Sept 17: RLF Working Group call, 10am
Sept 18: [Brownfields Best Practices](#), Poplar
Sept 22 – 26: [MACo Annual Conference](#), Great Falls
Sept 26: [ASQ Intermountain Seminar](#)



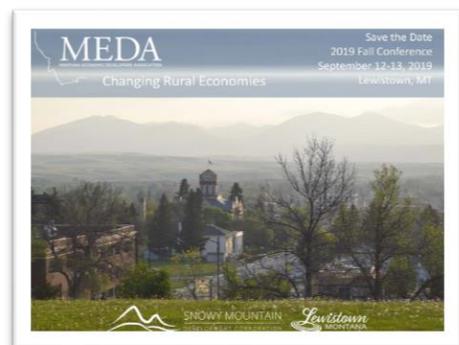
Oct 2 – 4: MT Nonprofit [“Breakthrough” Conference](#)
Oct 2 – 4: [MT League of Cities & Towns Conference](#)
Oct 14-16: [Innovate MT](#)
Oct 19 -20: [NADO Annual Training](#)

[MT Women’s Biz Center](#)
[SBDC Training Calendar](#)
[MNA Training Calendar](#)
[MMEC Training Calendar](#)

WE ARE ALMOST AT 100!

Yes, almost 100 people have registered to attend “Changing Rural Economies ~ MEDA 2019 Fall Conference” in Lewistown, on September 12th – 13th. [Check out the latest agenda updates](#) and you will realize the high level of networking and program information available. See you there!

[Don't forget the Brownfields Workshop on September 11th in Lewistown](#)



MEDA SENDS OUT RFP

After much discussion, planning, and editing, MEDA has published an RFP titled “Montana Next Generation Economic and Community Development Tools.” The outcome of this study will be an analysis to redefine the essential economic and community development tools to drive Montana’s economic future. Please share the [RFP](#) with entities and partners you feel would be a fit for this task. In addition, if you would be interested in financially supporting this study, please contact the MEDA office at 406.563.5259.

WELCOME TO NEW MEDA MEMBERS

Welcome to our new MEDA Members: Ashley Bonamie, Easter Plains EDC; Marcell Bruski, Big Sky EDA; and Beth Saboe, American Prairie Reserve. MEDA’s membership is now at 242. Plan to meet Ashley, Marcell, and Beth at the conference in Lewistown.

OPPORTUNITY ZONE SOLICITATION – Spread the word

Montana's Opportunity Zones



25 out of 106 Federally Eligible
Census tracts (limited to 25)
Total estimated population of chosen
tracts = 94,401. (Source: U.S. Census Bureau ACS 2013-2017)

In partnership with Montana Department of Commerce, MEDA seeks an individual or firm with the qualities and expertise to work on specific tasks with Montana's Opportunity Zones. Please share [this link](#) with individuals or entities with expertise in Opportunity Zones.

CONGRATS on the MEDA SCHOLARSHIP

Adam Vauthier, Anaconda Local Development, was the winner of a \$900 MEDA Rick Jones Memorial Scholarship for the third quarter round. The fourth quarter deadline is November 1st. [Apply here.](#)

MEDA WORKING GROUPS UPDATE

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

- **MEDA RLF Working Group**– Tiffany Melby, Bear Paw Development, Chair. This group will meet on September 17th and have a guest speaker regarding DownHome. [Notes from previous call.](#)
- **MEDA Opportunity Zone Working Group** – While this group has not met (a meeting is pending soon), you can learn from the MT Dept. of Commerce [presentation](#) shared at the NADC conference this summer.
- **MEDA Remote Work Working Group** –The next meeting is pending. Review [the previous minutes here](#) and check out the interesting [Grow Remote](#) website.
- **CRDCs Working Group** – Montana's Certified Regional Development Corporations recently met in Great Falls to exchange ideas and strategize regarding economic development work across Montana.



Senator Tester made a surprise visit to the CRDC meeting; a great exchange was held on Montana's economic development successes as well as economic development needs.

YOUR MEDA BOARD AT WORK

The MEDA Board will meet in Lewistown, immediately following the conference on Friday, September 13th. All are welcome to attend. We're In This Together, MEDA.



MONTANA NADO AWARD WINNER - GFDA

Congratulations to Great Falls Development Authority for winning not one, but two awards from NADO: Great Falls Food and Ag Development Center and Great Falls Region Bridge Loans. The Impact Awards program honors NADO members for their creative approaches to advancing regional community and economic development and improved quality of life. [2019 NADO Impact Award recipients](#)

2019 LEGISLATIVE INTERIM MEETINGS

Important work is done between legislative sessions. Here are two Interim Committee Meeting updates:

- **Economic Affairs legislators meet Sept. 11 in Helena**

The Economic Affairs Interim Committee's Sept. 11 meeting in Room 137 of the State Capitol will feature discussion and adoption of its 2019-2020 work plan, which covers its monitoring duties for various state agencies, studies assigned to the committee, and issues of concern to EAIC members. Meeting materials are available on the committee [website](#).

- **Local Government Interim Committee Meets September 12**

The Local Government Interim Committee (LGIC) will meet September 12 at 8:30 a.m. in Room 137 of the State Capitol in Helena. The committee will finalize its work plan and strategize how the committee will meet its study goals for the duration of the interim. Materials are posted on the [LGIC website](#).

WANTED: TEAM MEMBERS FOR FORT BENTON AND WHITEHALL



Not one but two community reviews are pending: one in Fort Benton on October 22nd and one in Whitehall, the week of November 18th. If you are interested in serving on a team, please contact MEDA at 406.563.5259. For more general information on the process visit <https://www.communityreview.org/> and <http://www.medamembers.org/resources/community-reviews>

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.

An accurate census count is vital to obtain federal funding for:



Economic Development



Public Health



Education



Political Power



Housing



Research

- On the <http://census.mt.gov> website, you can find not just Montana talking points and flyers, but materials from the U.S. Census Bureau.

[50 Ways Census Data Are Used](#)
[Confidentiality of the 2020 Census Data](#)
[2020 Census Questionnaire](#)

2020 Census Timeline
Census at a Glance
Top 10 Facts Census Data Can Tell You About Your Community

- **IEDC Webinar:** Augmented and Virtual Reality – New realities in economic development marketing. September 25th, 2:30pm – 4:00pm ET. [REGISTER](#)
- **EDA Launches Opportunity Zones Resource Webpage**
 The [U.S. Economic Development Administration](#) (EDA) is encouraging its economic development partners to find ways to highlight Opportunity Zones in their regions in order to attract investment and encourage public-private partnerships. EDA has created an [EDA Opportunity Zones Webpage](#) for economic development stakeholders and others to use as a resource to help them foster job creation and attract private investment. Click [here](#) to access the EDA resource page.

- **Made in Montana 2020 Tradeshow and Taste our Place**

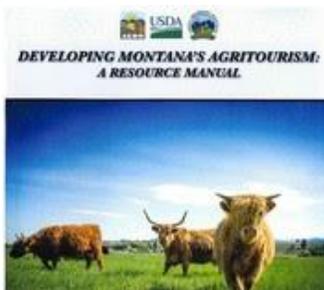
Mark your calendars! The 2020 Tradeshow will be held March 13 (wholesale buyer day) and 14 (public day) in Helena. We will begin accepting exhibitor applications to the 2020 tradeshow at 8:00 AM on Tuesday, October 15. Wholesale buyer registration will open in in December. [Taste our Place](#) For information on developing Taste our Place in your area, please email [Susan Joy](#) or call her at 406.841.2868



- **NADO's 2019 Annual Training Conference, Reimagining Regional Development: Building Capacity, Building Regions**, will occur October 19 – 22 in Reno, NV. This conference provides NADO members an abundance of opportunities to network with peers from across the nation and take part in targeted training opportunities specific to regional development organizations.



- **Developing Montana's Agritourism: A Resource Manual**



This manual was created to help Montana's farmers, ranchers and producers explore agritourism as a product offering and economic opportunity. The first of its kind in Montana, the manual provides guidelines for building a business as well as a marketing plan, it presents important contacts and resources, discusses risk management, and shares existing agritourism success stories around the state. Copies of this manual are available at no cost. Please send your request for a copy to [Susan Joy](#).

- **Small Business Webinar Series: Rethinking Innovation in Montana**

This webinar provides an overview of how small business owners can innovate in small business to create customer experiences that attract and retain customers. [Register](#) It is free! September 5th, 11am.

Small Business Webinar Series 2019

Rethinking Innovation in Montana

Thursday, September 5th, 2019
11 AM, MST

This webinar will provide an overview of how small business owners can innovate in small business to create customer experiences that attract and retain customers.

Register at
<https://mtabdc.eccenterdirect.com/events/4176>

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.

- Join the webinar live or access the recorded webinar
- and see additional resources at <https://www.mt.gov/communitydevelopment.org/smallbusiness.html>
- For questions, email patcooney@montana.edu



Barnett Sporkin-Morrison
Director
Great Falls Food and Agriculture Development Center (FADC)
Great Falls Development Authority
www.greatfallsmontana.org

GRANT OPPORTUNITIES



Montana has many business assistance tools [here](#). Want to receive updates from the Department of Commerce? **Subscribe to receive [email updates here](#).**

- ⇒ Check out the updated website from **MSU Extension** and their great list of grants!
<http://msucommunityresources.org/GrantOpportunities.html>

- ⇒ ***Indian Equity Fund Small Business Grant***
The Indian Equity Fund (IEF) Small Business Grant is accepting applications for fiscal year 2020. Enrolled members of federally or state-recognized tribes residing in Montana may apply for funds to help start or expand their business. Up to \$320,000 in funding is available, with individual awards up to \$14,000. The deadline to apply is September 30. For more information, visit MARKETMT.COM/ICP/IEF.

- ⇒ ***Tourism Grant Application Cycle Now Open!***
The Tourism Grant Program awards funds to projects that strengthen Montana's economy through the development and enhancement of the State's tourism and recreation industry. Funds are awarded annually to projects that develop and enhance tourism and recreation products that have the potential to increase non-resident visitation. For an overview of the program including guidelines, timelines, updates, and an outline of the application, you can watch a video of the webinar training workshop that was recently hosted by the Tourism Grant Program by visiting the Tools & Resources [webpage](#).

- ⇒ **Infrastructure funding available for schools, local governments**
Communities and school districts impacted by the growth or decline of natural resource development can [now apply](#) for a portion of \$21.5 million in funds for needed infrastructure investments. The Delivering Local Assistance Program was created as part of a \$400 million infrastructure investment package passed by the 2019 Legislature and signed by Governor Bullock. Delivering Local Assistance focuses grant dollars to local governments and school districts for a range of infrastructure projects including water, sewer, bridge, public safety, government administration and schools. Don't wait to submit your application. **The deadline to apply for grant funds is September 30, 2019!** <https://comdev.mt.gov/Programs-and-Boards/Delivering-Local-Assistance>

- ⇒ **USDA Solicits Applications for Rural Energy for America Program (REAP)**
The USDA Rural Business Cooperative Service has issued a notice of solicitation for applications for the Rural Energy for America Program (REAP). This solicitation has been issued prior to the passage of final appropriations in order to allow potential applicants time to submit applications for financial assistance under REAP for FY 2020. REAP helps agricultural producers and rural small businesses reduce energy costs and consumption and helps meet the nation's energy needs. REAP includes two types of funding assistance: 1) Renewable Energy Systems and Energy Efficiency Assistance, and 2) Energy Audit and Renewable Energy Development Assistance Grants. More information is available [here](#).

- ⇒ MEDA is a member of [GrantStation](#). Email [gloria](#) if you would like the username and password.

- ⇒ **USDA Seeks Applications for Rural Economic Development Grants**
The grants can be used for business startup costs; business expansion; business incubators; technical assistance feasibility studies; advanced telecommunications services and computer networks for medical,

educational, and job training services; and community facilities projects for economic development. Applicants are encouraged to consider projects that provide measurable results in helping rural communities build robust and sustainable economies through strategic investments in infrastructure, partnerships and innovation. Key strategies include:

- Achieving e-Connectivity for Rural America
- Developing the Rural Economy
- Harnessing Technological Innovation
- Supporting a Rural Workforce
- Improving Quality of Life

Application deadlines are First Quarter, Sept. 30, 2019; Second Quarter, Dec. 31, 2019; Third Quarter, March 31, 2020; and Fourth Quarter, June 30, 2020. Applications are due by 4:30 p.m. local time at the Rural Development state office where the project will be located. For a list of offices, visit the [state office website](#).

September 2019