

PART 1

ORGANIZATION

AND

MANAGEMENT

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Organizational Overview

The Great Northern Development Corporation – GNDC

The Great Northern Development Corporation of northeastern Montana is a private, non-profit corporation incorporated under the laws of the State of Montana. Articles of Incorporation were filed on October 18, 1995 in specific response to the federal legislation of P.L. 8-136, the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965, as amended. The Great Northern Development Corporation submitted its first regional Overall Economic Development Program (OEDP) in 1997. The first update to the OEDP was completed in 1998 and the district became designated a U.S. Economic Development Administration Economic Development District.

In 2002 the Great Northern Development Corporation submitted its Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). The CEDS was approved within that same year.

The Great Northern Development Corporation has been in continuous operation since 1995. While the Board of Directors, officers and staff have undergone changes, the mission of the district remains the same. Realizing that positive changes must originate within specific communities, the Board of Directors of the district believes its role is to provide the resources required to make those changes a reality. Effecting change brings together agencies, community leaders, businesses and individuals with a common goal.

In the beginning Valley, Roosevelt, Daniels, Sheridan and McCone Counties as well as the Fort Peck Sioux and Assiniboine Tribes comprised the Great Northern Development Corporation. Later Garfield County requested inclusion into the region expanding the district to a six county Economic Development District.

The district employs six full time professional economic development specialists including an Executive Director, a Housing Specialist/ Marketing Manager, a Loan Officer, Small Business Development Center Director, a Brownfields Program Manager/ Grant Administrator, and a Financial Officer/ Administrative Assistant. Each staff has specific responsibilities and works with specific committees within the organization. The Executive Director is responsible for reporting to the Board of Directors on a monthly basis and various funders. Final responsibility of all activities rests with the Board of Directors.

The economic downturn experienced in Montana during the 1990s caused the State of Montana to assess “best practices” among economic development efforts, one of them being an increased interest in regionalization. As a result, the State of Montana developed the Certified Regional Development Corporation concept. In 2004 the

Montana legislature allocated funding to the CRDC program and Requests for Proposals were released. The Great Northern Development Corporation was approved as a Certified Regional Development Corporation. The goals of the CRDC program are to provide small business technical assistance, support revolving loan programs, provide planning, grant writing and administrative services to the rural communities. The State of Montana has continued to financially support the CRDC program.

Board of Directors

The Membership of the Governing Board

The District’s Board of Directors is made up of nineteen members, reflecting a balance of elected officials and private citizens.

As the Great Northern Development Corporation has a large Board of Directors a variety of interests, concern, ethnic backgrounds and special interests are represented. The By-laws of the EDD do not specify the percentages of elected officials compared to the private sector. The By-laws specify the number of Board representation that will be appointed by each member.

Thirteen members, or a simple majority, are elected officials or employees of the municipality they represent. Eleven members represent the private sector. One member represents workforce development and one member represents post secondary education as an employee of the Fort Peck Community College.

1. Government Representatives (51-65%)

Elected officials and/or employees of a general purpose unit of State, local or Indian tribal government who have been appointed to represent the government.

Name	Government	Position
Dewayne Jager	City of Wolf Point	Mayor
Thomas “Stoney” Anketell	Fort Peck Tribes	Fort Peck Tribes Councilman
Jack Murnion	Garfield County	County Commissioner
Gary Macdonald	Roosevelt County	County Commissioner
Dan Carney	City of Glasgow	Mayor
Raedelle Aspenlider	City of Culbertson	City Clerk
*Connie Eissinger	McCone County	County Commissioner
Gary Linder	Daniels County	County Commissioner
*Richard Kerstein	Town of Scobey	City Council Person
Carol Markuson	Town of Circle	City Clerk/Treasurer
Michael Downs	Town of Jordan	City Council Person
Walter White Tail Feather	Fort Peck Tribes	Planning Fort Peck Tribes

2. Non-Government Representatives (35-49%)

A. Private Sector Representatives: Any senior management official or executive holding a key decision making position, with respect to any for-profit enterprise (At least one required)

Name	Company/Enterprise	Position
*Duane Kurokawa	Western Bank of Wolf Point	President
*Frank French	Hi-Line Sports	Co-Owner
Richard Rice	The Greeter	Owner
*Doug Smith	Smith & Associates	Owner
Peggy Nerud		Artist

B. Stakeholder Organization Representatives: Executive Directors of Chambers of Commerce, or representatives of institutions of post-secondary education, workforce development groups or labor groups. (At least one required)

Name	Organization	Position
Mark Sansaver	Post Secondary Education	Grant Administration, Fort Peck Community College
*Mona Amundson	Montana Job Service	Retired

Calculations	Number	Percent
1. Government Representatives (51-65%)	12	63%
2. Non-Government Representatives (35-49%)		
A. Private Sector Representatives (at least 1)	5	
B. Stakeholder Organization Representatives	<u>2</u>	37%
Total Board Membership	19	100%

*Represents the Executive Committee. Mona Amundson serves as the President of the Great Northern Development Corporation.

CEDS Committee

The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Committee is a direct and complete overlap of the Board of Directors with input provided by staff. Fourteen

members or 58% represent the private sector with 42% representing other economic development interests. The following detail provides additional information.

CEDS Committee Members

1. Private Sector Representatives (At least 51%)

Any senior management official or executive holding a key decision-making position, with respect to any for-profit enterprise.

Name	Company	Position
Dewayne Jager	Local Government	Mayor
Thomas “Stoney” Anketell	Minorities	Fort Peck Tribes Councilman
Jack Murnion	Local Government	County Commissioner
Gary Macdonald	Local Government	County Commissioner
Dan Carney	Local Government	Mayor
Michael Downs	Local Government	City Council

2. Representatives of Other Economic Interests (No more than 49%)

Persons who provide additional representation of the main economic interest of the region. These may include, but are not limited to: public officials, community leaders, institutions of higher education, minority and labor groups, and private individuals.

Name	Company	Position
Mona Amundson	Montana Job Service	Retired
Raedelle Aspenlider	Education	Clerk, Culberson Public Schools
Peggy Nerud		Artist
Connie Eissinger	Eissinger Farms	Co-Owner
Gary Linder	Linder Farms	Co-Owner
Richard Kerstein	Kerstein Greenhouse	Co-Owner
Duane Kurokawa	Western Bank of Wolf Point	President
Walter White Tail Feather	Minorities	Planning Fort Peck Tribes
Carol Markuson	Low Income Residents	Housing Committee, Town of Circle
Frank French	Hi-Line Sports	Co-Owner
Richard Rice	The Greeter	Owner
Mark Sansaver	Post Secondary Education	Grant Administration, Fort Peck Community College
Doug Smith	Smith & Associates	Owner

Calculations	Number	Percent
Private Sector Representatives (at least 51%)	14	74%

Representatives of Other Economic Interests	<u>5</u>	<u>26%</u>
Totals	19	100%

CEDS meetings were held on a bi monthly basis with progress reports prepared for each meeting. In addition, the Great Northern Development Corporation held several public meetings throughout the region and attended several committee meetings focusing on specific needs of the communities.

The public meetings were advertised through local newspapers, radio stations, invitations to service organizations and posters strategically placed at public locations such as libraries, courthouses, welfare offices, grocery stores and city water departments. In many cases the Great Northern Development Corporation provided a light lunch and a drawing was held for a door prize.

Participation took an active part in the process. While many of the suggestions and concerns were redundant, the information gathered was invaluable. The Board of Directors played an active role in the meetings and representatives were available to address concerns and learn about the needs of the communities.

The professional staff of the Economic Development District is charged with carrying out the directives of the Board of Directors and the CEDS Committee in preparing the document. Staff is given the responsibility of gathering and analyzing data regarding the population, housing, land use and economic trends of the region. While the Board of Directors and community leaders provide input and are involved in projects as time and interest allows, the staff is responsible for the implementation of the work plan items.

Staff

The Great Northern Development Corporation staff includes –

Executive Director – Martin DeWitt began as the Executive Director of the Great Northern Development Corporation in January of 2012. Martin has served as the Loan Officer for the organization since February of 2006 prior to the Executive Director position. He is the Chief Administrative Officer and responsible to the Board of Directors for all aspects of district day-to-day operations. His duties are to oversee all incoming and outgoing funds, oversee and prepare the CEDS and supervise staff. He is responsible for maintaining, coordinating and cooperating with outside institutions, agencies, groups and member governments. He provides technical assistance as requested for member governments as it relates to public facility projects and economic development. The Executive Director is responsible for program development.

Martin DeWitt also serves on committees to represent and benefit the region, such as the Montana Economic Development Association Board, Montana Indianpreneurship Equity Fund Local Review Committee and the BEAR assessment team.

Loan Officer – Stacey Martinez is the loan officer for the Great Northern Development Corporation. Stacey manages the Community Development Block Grant Revolving Loan Fund, the U.S.D.A. Intermediary Relending Program, the U.S.D.A Rural Microentrepreneur Assistance Program, the Environmental Protection Agency Revolving Loan Fund, the Montana Board of Investments Relending Program and the MicroBusiness Revolving Loan Fund.

Stacey Martinez reviews loan applications, provides technical assistance to clients and prepares a loan officer report for the Loan Review Committee. The loan officer is responsible for closing loan documents, recording payments and reporting to the Loan Review Committee the Executive Director and the funding agencies.

Upon recommendation of the Loan Review Committee the loan officer is responsible for collections, foreclosures or settlements on loans in default.

The Loan Officer also serves on and provides services for committees that provide opportunities to the region, such as the Montana Economic Development Association RLF, Montana Community Development Corporation New Market Tax Credit Committee and BEAR program.

SBDC Director – Lorene Hintz is the Small Business Development Center Director. The SBDC Director is responsible for providing technical assistance to business wishing to start up or expand in the Great Northern Development Corporation region. The SBDC Director assists in the business plan development, cash flow projections, licensing, employee issues and financial analysis. Lorene is also responsible for group training sessions including marketing, personnel relationships, bookkeeping and accounting, etc. The SBDC Director offers outreach for the Business Expansion And Retention (BEAR) program within the region. Additionally, the SBDC coordinates efforts with the Job Service of America to offer funding opportunities to businesses for training through the Incumbent Worker Training program.

Housing Specialist/ Marketing Officer – Brianna Bohmbach is the Housing Specialist and Marketing Officer for the Great Northern Development Corporation. The Housing Specialist / Marketing Officer administers grants in relation to the housing rehabilitation and demolition as well as maintains the HOME Program.

Additionally the Housing Specialist / Marketing Officer develops all marketing, advertising and promotional activities including developing a quarterly newsletter. She establishes marketing strategies to meet organizational objectives while evaluating customer research, market conditions and implement marketing plan changes as needed.

Brownfields Program Manager/Grant Administrator – Shelli Isle is the Brownfields Program Manager/Grant Administrator for the Great Northern Development Corporation.

The Brownfields Program Manager/Grant Administrator administers all grants in relation to public facilities and Brownfields projects. She supervises the Brownfields Program and is responsible for community involvement, marketing of the program as well as evaluation of Brownfields incentives, preparation of necessary plans, work plans, and applications.

Financial Officer/ Administrative Assistant – Toni Pedersen is the Financial Officer/ Administrative Assistant of the Great Northern Development Corporation. Financial Officer/ Administrative Assistant provides support services to the above mentioned position and arranges for meetings, manages the business incubator, assists in the development of proposals, researches background information, manages the offices, supervises the janitor, etc.

Additionally the Financial Officer / Administrative Assistant is responsible for recording income and expenses, preparing claims, financial statements, employee payroll and personnel administration, purchasing, maintaining accounts payable and balances and accounts for the organization. Technical assistance, review and auditing services are provided by Hamilton Consulting Group, PLLP.

The Great Northern Development Corporation Board of Directors supports continued education and provides the resources for employees to become National Development Council certified, IEDC certified, and technology literate.

The Executive Director is certified as an Economic Development Finance Professional through the National Development Council is working on his Master's Degree in Business, has completed Grant Management Services training, Brownfields Management training and attends economic and community development as well as grant writer and administration workshops.

SBDC Director has completed the Certified Business Advisor training and is certified as an Economic Development Finance Professional from the National Development Council and a Quickbooks Trainer and regularly attends business development training.

The Housing Specialist / Marketing Officer is working towards certification as a National Development Council Housing Development Finance Professional Certification Professional and regularly attends specific workshops focusing on housing and community development as well as grant administration.

Brownfields Program Manager/Grant Administrator regularly attends Brownfields Management and grant administration training.

Committees

The Great Northern Development Corporation has relied on standing committees as well as special project committees to provide input to staff, develop projects and programs and report to the Board of Directors. The membership of each of these volunteer committees

includes representation from the private and public sectors with the rosters of each identified in the following tables.

Revolving Loan Fund Committee

Since 1997, the Great Northern Development Corporation EDD has participated in the State of Montana’s Micro Business program and the Community Development Block Grant Revolving Loan Fund Program. The EDD was awarded U.S.D.A. Rural Development Intermediary Relending Program funds in 2000, 2005 and 2001. In 2011 the EDD was awarded U.S.D.A Rural Development Rural Microentrepreneur Assistance Program funds. At the present time the EDD has Revolving Loan Funds totaling over \$5,000,000; Micro Business \$698,999, CDBG Revolving Loan Funds \$2,240,000, Montana Board of Investments \$500,000, and U.S.D.A. Rural Development \$1,750,000.

The Revolving Loan Fund Committee is responsible for establishing policies and procedures and approving or declining loan requests. The Committee may also modify the conditions of each loan and provides direction regarding foreclosures or settlements.

Revolving Loan Fund Committee		
Name	Occupation	Employer
Mona Amundson, Chairperson	Retired	
Richard Rice	Self Employed	The Greeter –Newspaper
Wayne Hendrickson	Branch President	First Community Bank
Jerald Peterson	Certified Public Accountant	Western Bank of Wolf Point
Rex Phipps	Bank President	Garfield County Bank
Jodi Benson	Public Relations	Nemont Telephone

Eastern Montana Brownfields Coalition Committee

In 2010, the Great Northern Development Corporation EDD was awarded \$1,500,000 Environmental Protection Agency Revolving Loan fund for the purpose of remediating contaminated sites for the redevelopment or reuse of the property allowing for economic development and community growth. The award spurred the Eastern Montana Brownfields Coalition encompassing the three Economic Development Districts of Great Northern Development, Southeastern Montana Development Corporation and Eastern Plains Economic Development Corporation. In EDD was awarded an EPA Brownfields Assessment grant to offer sub-recipient assessment funds for Phase I & II determinations on eligible sites.

The Eastern Montana Brownfields Coalition Committee is responsible for establishing policies and procedures and approving or declining loan applications and sub-recipient grant requests. The Committee may also modify the conditions of each loan and provides direction regarding foreclosures or settlements.

Eastern Brownfields Coalition Committee

Name	Occupation	Employer
Jason Rittal	Executive Director	EPEDC
Jim Atchison	Executive Director	SEMDC
Monty Lesh	Real Estate Broker	Lesh & Company
Gilbert "Giz" Quade	County Commissioner	Wibaux County
Rex Phipps	Bank President	Garfield County Bank
Mike Lienen	Branch President	Independence Bank of Poplar

Housing and Public Facilities Committee

The Great Northern Development Corporation manages housing program income for many of the small communities. The EDD provides assistance in plan development, needs assessments and evaluations of potential infrastructure projects. The EDD receives an annual allocation of HOME funds and administers those funds in accordance with federal regulations. The Committee is responsible for reviewing housing applications and approving or denying requests.

Housing and Public Facilities Committee

Name	Occupation	Employer
Doug Smith	Professional Planning	Sheridan County
Aldon Jones	Rancher	Self
Carol Makuson	City Clerk	Town of Circle
Carlo Porteen	Consultant	Self
Raedelle Aspenlider	City of Culbertson	City Clerk

Incubator Committee

The Great Northern Development Corporation owns two properties in Wolf Point, Montana. Those properties have been designated a business incubator. The committee is responsible for establishing policies, reviewing applications for admission, maintaining the properties.

Incubator Committee

Name	Occupation	Employer
Duane Kurokawa	Bank President	Western Bank of Wolf Point
Gary Macdonald	County Commissioner	Roosevelt County
Gary Jiede	Delivery Services	Hi-Line Wholesale

Participating Governments

Valley, Roosevelt, Daniels, McCone, Sheridan and Garfield Counties; along with the incorporated towns/cities of Glasgow, Wolf Point, Poplar, Culbertson, Circle, Scobey, Plentywood, Jordan and the Sioux and Assiniboine Fort Peck Indian Reservation constitute the participating governments of the regional development corporation. Self-

contained governments with typical county functions and departments administer the six counties that currently participate in the Great Northern Development Corporation. The administrative centers or county seats are located in Glasgow (Valley County), Wolf Point (Roosevelt County), Scobey (Daniels County), Circle (McCone County), Plentywood (Sheridan County) and Jordan (Garfield County).

The Sioux and Assiniboine Tribes of the Fort Peck Indian Reservation are organized and governed under a Tribal Constitution and by-laws approved by the Secretary of Interior on October 1, 1960. This constitution establishes the governing body and its authority to administer the overall affairs of the Fort Peck Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes. The Tribal Executive Board, comprise of 15 enrolled members of the Fort Peck Tribes, is the governing body of the reservation.

Member Communities

The Great Northern Development Corporation members include the local counties, town, cities and Fort Peck Tribes. A listing of elected officials follows.

Roosevelt County Commissioners: Gary Macdonald, Duane Nygaard, Jim Shanks
McCone County Commissioners: Connie Eissinger, James Moos, Janet Wolff
Daniels County Commissioners: Gary Linder, C. William Tande, James Snare
Sheridan County Commissioners: Gerald Kohler, Robert Nickolaisen, William Nyby
Valley County Commissioners: David Reinhardt, David Pippin, Bruce Peterson
Garfield County Commissioners: Robert Cosgriff, Jerry L. Coldwell, Jack Murnion

Fort Peck Tribal Executive Board: Floyd Azure (Chairman), Annette Lambert, Thomas “Stoney” Anketell III, Leonard “Big Horn” Crow Belt, Charles Headdress, Thomas “Tommy Christian, Robert “Bobby” Welch, Garrett Big Leggins, Eric Bruguier, Gerald “Bootsie” Jackson, Mike Thompson, Melvin “Terry” Rattling Thunder, Edward Bauer, Walter Clark and John Weeks

Fort Peck Tribal Economic Development Committee: Eric Bruguier (Chairman), Garrett Big Leggins (Vice Chairman), All Executive Board Members.

Wolf Point: DeWayne Jager (Mayor), Lee Redekopp (Council President), Arden DeWitt, John “Sonny” Douglas, Travis Braaten, Christopher Dschaak, and Judy Page.

Scobey: Ronald Audet (Mayor), Richard Kerstein, Jon Baker, Nikki Grendal, and Nellie Fouhy.

Poplar: Greg Norgaard (Mayor), William Sadler, Eddi Mae Symanski, Howard Azure, and Dennis Reum.

Plentywood: Don Jensen (Mayor), John Kemp, Jr., Larry Jensen, Chad Thompson, and Randy Rice.

Jordan: Tom Spillum (Mayor), Casey Thomas, Michael Downs, Karen Barnes, and Virgil Hellyer.

Glasgow: Dan Carney (Mayor), Becky Erickson, Rod Karst, Melanie Sorenson, Daniel Durell, Norm Girard, and Neil Chouinard.

Culbertson: Gordon Oelkers (Mayor), Dallas Dehner, Mark Nelson, W. Bruce Houle, and Bernie “Butch” Finnicum.

Circle: Njadl (Ned) Sikveland (Mayor), Nick Shriver, Cecila Arnston, Angela Metzenberg, Joel Haynie, Larry Cornelia and Clint Haynie.

Cities, Towns and Communities

Forty two communities are located within the Great Northern Development Corporation Economic Development District. Of these, 17 are incorporated municipalities. Incorporated communities are * in the following listing.

Valley County: Glasgow*, Fort Peck*, Nashua*, Lustre, Opheim, Glentana, Richland, Larslan, Hinsdale, Vandalia, Tampico, Frazer and Oswego.

Roosevelt County: Wolf Point*, Poplar*, Brockton*, Culbertson*, Froid* and McCabe.

Sheridan County: Plentywood*, Westby*, Outlook*, Redsonite, Raymond, Antelope, Coalridge, Reserve, Dagmar, Medicine Lake*, and Homestead.

McCone County: Circle*, Vida and Brockway.

Daniels County: Scobey*, Flaxville*, Whitetail, Madoc, Four Buttes and Peerless.

Garfield County: Jordan* and Brusset.

PART 2

State of the Region

The Area and Its Economy

The Area and Its Economy

When we consider a successful strategy to move the Great Northern Development Corporation region forward, we must first examine where we have been and where we are. The following discussion highlights the history of the region, the physical features of the EDD and the resources that can be enhanced.

Historical Setting

In 1804 Lewis and Clark led the first organized exploration through what was to become the great State of Montana and the Great Northern Development Corporation Economic Development District. In those early days the economy of the region was based on the capitalization of natural and renewable resources. Early accounts and journals written by these first explorers tell of great fur trapping opportunities, an abundance of wildlife and spacious grasslands.

The first settlements along the Missouri River were central to economic development in northeastern Montana as cores of furs were traded with Native American and European trappers. Fort Union, Culbertson and Wolf Point were fur trading centers where wolves, buffalo and beaver hides were frozen during the winter and shipped to St. Louis, Missouri on barges following the first thaw.

Next the homesteaders and cattle barons fought to master the land. Intrigued by the promises of free land and promoted by railroad advertisements homesteaders built sod shanties on the prairie and divided the land into ownership partials. Some were able to endure the tough winters and dry summers and produce a legacy of independence still evident today. Others left the land and returned to the cities. As a result of this and a continuing exodus, farms and ranches increased in size and the population began to decline.

Organized economic development efforts within local communities were the result of a concern regarding the loss in population. Volunteer groups attempted to develop economic opportunity and retain the population base. Eventually it became apparent that the rural communities could not singly affect change. Northeastern Montana counties and cities agreed to consolidate efforts and band together.

In 1995, the Great Northern Development Corporation filed its Articles of Incorporation, obtained 501 (c) 3 Internal Revenue Tax Exempt Status and developed by-laws that govern the organization. The Board of Directors targeted areas of particular concern including business retention, encouragement of business expansion, education and infrastructure development.

General Description of the Great Northern Development Corporation Region

The Great Northern Development Corporation region is located in the northeastern most corner of the State of Montana. With the Canadian border to the north and North Dakota to the east; Daniels County, Sheridan County, Roosevelt County, Valley County Garfield County and McCone County make up the Great Northern Development Corporation Economic Development District.

The area is large and lightly populated. Daniels County is 1426.1 square mile or 912,728 acres, Valley County 4920.9 square miles or 3,149,399 acres, Sheridan County 1676.7 square miles or 1,073,056 acres, Roosevelt County 2355.7 square miles or 1,507,618 acres, McCone County 2642.6 square miles or 1,691,263 acres and Garfield County 4,455 square miles or 2,987,633 acres for a total of 17,477 square miles or 11,321,697 acres. The population as per the 2010 census was 25,891 or one person for every 115.39 acres.

The rolling hills and stream dissected plateaus descend from the Canadian border on the north toward the Missouri River and from the Big Sheep Mountains on the south toward the Missouri River. The Poplar River, the Big Muddy River, Porcupine Creek, the Milk River and the Redwater River, along with several smaller creeks and tributaries empty into the Missouri that flows easterly through North Dakota and on to the Mississippi.

Fort Peck Dam, built across the Missouri in the 1930's as a W.P.A. project, generates hydroelectric power that is sold to the Western Area Power Administration, a part of the MAP Power Pool, and dispatched through centers which service the entire continental United States.

Fort Peck Lake is 240,000 acres in size and has 1,600 miles of shoreline, more shoreline than the State of California. The lake is widely known for Salmon, Sauger, and Walleye fishing as well as boating, water skiing and camping activities. The Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge, adjacent to Fort Peck Lake is the largest refuge in the continental United States.

The Missouri River Valley's rich, irrigatable, agricultural land produces hard red spring wheat, alfalfa hay, sugar beets, beans, safflower corn and potatoes. Dryland farms and ranches produce cattle, sheep, safflower, hard red spring wheat, winter wheat, durum wheat, flax and barley.

The weather is semi-arid with normal annual rainfall ranging from 11.55 inches with most rain falling during the growing season. The frost-free growing season lasts from mid-May to mid-September, ranging from 107 to 124 days. Temperatures vary greatly, throughout the seasons, from over 100 degrees Fahrenheit in the summer, to less than -20 degrees Fahrenheit in the winter.

Natural Resources

Land and Agriculture

Land use is illustrated on the following chart. As can be noted 56% or most of the land is rangeland suited for grazing cattle and sheep. Cropland occupies 43% of the land base or 3,999,676 acres. Wheat, barley, durum wheat, flax and pulse crops are the primary crops grown within the region. Crops are marketed on the commodity market with little or no value added.

County	Total Acreage	Cropland	Woodland	Pasture	Homesteads	Conservation Reserve & other Non-production Programs
Daniels	860,238	591,563	0	268,886	23,931	149,427
Garfield	2,391,958	409,816	34,031	1,935,136	19,924	80,316
McCone	1,506,824	576,597	3092	916,094	29,334	144,041
Roosevelt	1,451,828	783,914	3780	673,452	24,302	178,730
Sheridan	1,065,503	716,256	1141	341,328	32,957	156,321
Valley	2,061,260	921,504	7064	1,176,163	36,425	215,829
Totals	9,337,611	3,999,676	49,108	5,261,059	166,873	924,664

Source: 2007 Census of Agriculture – USDA National Agriculture Statistics Service

Additional acres are covered by water and are inland lakes including Fort Peck Lake in Garfield, McCone and Valley Counties and the Medicine Lake and Whitetail Reservoir in Sheridan County.

Agriculture provides renewable resources as a commodity and provides opportunity for additional wealth if the product is retained and value added. Therefore, agriculture must be examined to a greater degree.

Between 1997 and 2007 the number of farms in the district increased slightly from 2,882 farms to 3,254 with approximately one fourth of the farm owners working off the farm 200 hours or more. According to the Census of Agriculture the total farms includes very small farms, from one to nine acres. At the same time the value of the farms has increased significantly. The following table illustrates.

Average Value of Farms		
County	1997	2007
Daniels	535,291	1,279,818
Garfield	951,733	1,031,919
McCone	490,869	1,466,376
Roosevelt	478,914	1,416,662
Sheridan	421,906	1,174,858
Valley	535,490	1,575,621

The average market value per acre increased significantly between 1997 and 2007. This may be due, to a certain extent, to speculation and investments in land that are not based on agricultural production.

County	Value per acre 2002	Value per acre 2007	Difference
Daniels	292	591	299
Garfield	165	431	256
McCone	226	476	250
Roosevelt	299	710	411
Sheridan	335	664	329
Valley	257	589	332

Source: 2007 Census of Agriculture USDA National Agricultural Statistics Division.

It appears that total net income is regaining its 1970 position. Roosevelt County's total net income from agriculture exceeds the 1970 figure. These amounts are actual and are not adjusted for inflation.

Total Net Income (\$000)			
County	1970	1994	2007
Daniels	32,181	9,561	23,395
Garfield	21,144	6,049	11,033
McCone	20,516	7,538	18,397
Roosevelt	32,225	22,752	23,046
Sheridan	38,233	11,992	43,196
Valley	48,476	15,850	33,344

Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture

A discussion regarding land use and agriculture would not be complete without a discussion of the Conservation Reserve Program. In 2007 the Great Northern Development Corporation region has a total 924,664 acres enrolled in the program. Those acreages are broken down as follows.

* McCone County	144,041
* Valley County	215,829
* Sheridan County	158,321
* Daniels County	149,427
* Garfield County	80,316
* Roosevelt County	178,730

Contracts on nearly all those acres were scheduled to expire in 2007 and 2008. However, operators have been given the option to reenroll for two, three or five years contracts. As a result the land will be reintroduced into production at a graduating rate.

Mineral Resources

The District's primary mineral resources are natural gas, oil and coal. To a lesser degree sand, gravel bentonite and potash are located throughout the district. While gas and oil are being explored and developed, coal resources are, generally speaking intact.

The Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology include the Great Northern Development Corporation district in the Fort Union Region for oil, gas and coal exploration. According to the Energy Resources Map of Montana, strippable coalfields exist in Sheridan County, Roosevelt County and McCone County. While specific amounts were not available for Sheridan and Roosevelt Counties, the McCone County fields have been well defined as Great Northern Properties is currently filing applications for permits to develop.

The Timber Creek field, 26 miles west of Circle contains 724 million tons of recoverable coal. The Redwater River Field, immediately north of Circle is reported to contain 642 million tons. The Carroll Field, although not within the county boundaries, would also have an impact on job opportunities. The field, 25 miles northeast of Circle, is reported to contain 345 million tons. Sulfur content is very low in these fields, 0.3% in the Carroll and Redwater fields and 0.4% in the Timber Creek field. Low sulfur makes this product desirable on a national basis as low sulfur does not generate the amount of sludge when scrubbed that eastern high sulfur coal produces.

Oil and gas reserves appear to be adequate throughout the district with a large gas field located in the western portion of Valley County. Sheridan and Roosevelt Counties contain oil reserves with smaller quantities scattered throughout the others. Oil and gas production has traditionally been a "boom or bust" economy. The following table illustrates the boom and bust cycles of counties within the Great Northern Development Corporation EDD.

Oil and Natural Gas Production 1970-2011						
Department of Natural Resources and Conservation						
Oil (,000 bbls)	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2011
Daniels County	18.3	2.8	4.8	6.7	4.4	3.2
McCone Cty	469.5	171.9	43.1	33.1	5.6	4.2
Roosevelt Cty	3216.7	1390.2	1604.9	1458.5	1300.9	1788.9
Sheridan Cty	4697.7	3340.5	2239.1	1610.6	1393.3	1246.7
Valley County	N/A	N/A	314.3	166.3	108.6	100.3
Garfield Cty	N/A	N/A	N/A	21.3	11.8	13.2
Gas (,000mcf)	1960	1970	1980	1990	2010	2011
Daniels County	N/A	N/A	N/A	.24	0	0
McCone Cty	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0	0
Roosevelt Cty	N/A	223.1	689.0	825.8	667.5	1004.4
Sheridan Cty	N/A	665.0	1884.1	872.7	618.1	439.3
Valley County	2637.0	8587.7	2591.2	55.8	176.2	162.1
Garfield Cty	N/A	N/A	N/A	1.3	1.7	2.0

Western North Dakota recently exploded with oil activity. New technology and horizontal drilling propelled the state into the number 2 position in oil production in the United States, now ahead of Alaska. Texas is the only state in the union that produces more oil than North Dakota.

Eastern Montana is experiencing a spill over from North Dakota as housing supplies decline with a demand is placed on the limited workforce. The table above illustrates a decline of oil and gas production in many on the counties. A close examination of the permits to drill issued within the Great Northern Development Corporation region over the past 24 months as reported by the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation shows 69 permits to drill for oil or gas as of May 2012. There is some overlap with the reported production and the new wells but oil and gas exploration is moving westward into Montana.

Historically the wind and sun have been untapped natural energy resources in northeastern Montana. The rolling hills and unobstructed landscape provides an abundance of these resources that have gone undeveloped and unexplored. Only recently has an interest in wind energy been explored as a MET tower placed within the region illustrates good quality wind with a consistent 17.5 to 18 mph wind speed. Preliminary planning has been completed and the company plans to produce electricity from wind within four years.

Recreation and Tourism

Fort Peck Lake, the result of the world's largest hydraulic earth filled dam, is a center of recreational activity in eastern Montana. With 240,000 acres of water and 1600 miles of shoreline, the lake provides, Salmon, Sauger and Walleye Pike fishing for the outdoor

recreationist. The Fort Peck Walleye Tournament, the Walleye In-Fisherman Professional Walleye Trail and the Hell Creek Fishing Tournament are a few of the annual events held at the lake. Boating, water skiing and camping add to the summer activities with ice fishing and snowmobiling events held during the winter.

An Interpretive Center is a recent addition to the lake area. The Interpretive Center features a life sized Tyrannosaurus Rex in the entry and displays that depict the history of northeastern Montana. A warm water fish hatchery supplies a variety of fish to fishing sites throughout Montana and has allowed the Fort Peck Lake area to expand tourism activities. The Charles M. Russell game preserve, adjacent to Fort Peck Lake, is home for deer, antelope, elk and upland game birds. The refuge covers 1.1 million acres in Valley and McCone Counties.

The Fort Peck Summer Theatre was constructed in 1934 during the building of the dam and was the largest theatre in Montana for many years. The theatre operates during the summer months and host productions such as Sound of Music, Cats, the Nerd, and West Side Story.

The northeastern corner of Montana boasts the only state park – Brush Lake. The Medicine Lake National Wildlife Refuge is the summer home of more than 100,000 migratory waterfowl. Great blue herons, grebes, 16 species of ducks and a colony of 10,000 white pelicans share the prairie lake ecosystem.

Scobey's Frontier Town and Dirty Shame Dancers provide entertainment in a frontier setting for visitors from throughout the United States and Canada. Native American Powwows at Poplar River Days, the Standing Bear Celebration, Poplar Indian Days, the Wadopana Celebration, the Red Bottom Celebration and the Badlands Celebration provide authentic Native American activities. The Wolf Point Wild Horse Stampede, sanctioned by the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association attracts competitors and visitors from the United States and Canada.

Lewis and Clark spent more time in Montana than in any other state as they explored the Louisiana Purchase. Original campsites and events provide the opportunity for the expansion of tourism in northeastern Montana. Captain William Clark describes the area very simply in 1805: "The country on each side of the Missouri river is rich, high and beautiful."

Museums and golf courses are located in most communities. Trail rides, cattle drives, wagon trains, county fairs and rodeos provide a variety of summer activities. Hunting and fishing provide attractions for the novice and experienced sportsman with outfitting services available in most locations. Sheridan and Daniels counties are known nation wide for pheasant and upland game bird hunting. The Missouri River Breaks provides big game opportunities and trophy hunts.

A discussion on tourism would not be complete without inclusion of the dinosaur and other fossils. The barren terrain of northeastern Montana is a graveyard for world class

discoveries including the 1902 Tyrannosaurus Rex, one of the first in the world. This 65 million year old Cretaceous beast weighed over seven ton and stood 20 feet tall. The most complete T-Rex skeleton in the world was also found in 1990. Excavations continue yearly with some digs open to the public.

Environment

Air Quality

Air quality is rated Class 1 or Class 2. Occasionally air quality problems arise from dust generated by eroding croplands, dirt/gravel roads and drifting from large fires outside the region. However, as manufacturing and power generation activities have not been located within the district, the air quality has remained generally good.

Water Quality

Increased sediment and total dissolved solids due to soil runoff and saltwater disposal practices have impacted surface water quality. All water bodies are fishable and swimmable but are not drinkable without treatment. Most streams have been impacted to some degree by nonpoint source pollution.

While water supplies are adequate, high total dissolved solids as well as iron, sulfates and manganese characterize water supplies. Most towns and cities located in the district maintain filtration systems to reduce the amount of iron and manganese and most systems are chlorinated.

Hazardous Sites

Designated hazardous sites include; the Oswego Landfill, the Fort Peck Project, the Reading and Bates Oil Field, A&S Industries, Moe Chevrolet, the old Poplar landfill, the Poplar Post Office site, the Kenco refinery and the Tule Creek Gas Plant/Crystal Oil. Sites are ranked and action taken by the Department of Health and Environmental Sciences with highest priorities assigned the areas that meet program criteria. Criteria used for ranking is based on release to ground water or surface water that is a source of drinking water, danger of fire or explosion, release to the air that poses a threat to the public, contamination of the soil and existence of uncontrolled substances such as leaking containers.

Historic Sites

Many properties within the Great Northern Development Corporation EDD are eligible for listing on the National Registrar. The following are currently listed; the Wolf Point Bridge (Wolf Point), the Daniels County Courthouse (Scobey), the Gladstone Hotel (Circle), the Fort Peck Agency Historic District (Poplar), the Fort Union Trading Post (MT,ND border), Hales' Filling Station and Grocery, Tipi Hills (Medicine Lake National Wildlife refuge), the Comertown Historic District (Westby), the Larson Homestead

(Dagmar), the Outlook Depot (Outlook), the Raymond Grain Elevators (Raymond), the Rocky Valley Lutheran Church, the Thornwood School (Reserve), the Fort Peck Townsite and dam (Fort Peck), the Fort Peck Summer Theatre (Fort Peck), the Charles C. Sergeant house (Nashua) and the U.S. Post Office and Courthouse (Glasgow).

Endangered Species

Endangered species within the district include the Piping Plover and the Interior Least Tern. These birds nest on the sandbars in the Missouri River and at the Medicine Lake Wildlife refuge. The birds are especially sensitive to people and require the presence of high sandbars that are inaccessible to natural predators. Management of the Fort Peck Dam is important to the nesting success of these birds.

Other endangered species include the bald eagle, the peregrine falcon, the black-footed ferret, the whooping crane and the pallid sturgeon. While there is no designated critical habitat for endangered or threatened species within the district, significant bald eagle nesting habitat exists along the Missouri River below Fort Peck Dam. Black-footed ferrets may be found co-existing with prairie dogs.

Political Geography

As citizens of the State of Montana, District residents are governed by Governor Brian Schweitzer, and are represented in the United States Senate by Max Baucus and Jon Tester. The entire state is one congressional district, represented by Dennis Rehberg.

The following represent the Great Northern Development EDD in the Montana State House of Representatives.

- Lee Randall – Republican – House District 39
- Bill Harris – Republican – House District 30
- Frank Smith – Democrat – House District 31
- Tony Belcourt – Democrat – House District 32
- Wayne Stahl – Republican – House District 35
- Austin Knudsen – Republican – House District 36

Senators for the Great Northern EDD include;

- John Brenden – Republican – Senate District 18
- Jonathan Windy Boy – Democrat – Senate District 16
- Jim Peterson – Republican – Senate District 15
- Moore (Eric) Frederick – Republican – Senate District 20

Human Resources and Labor Profile

Population Characteristics

The following chart and table illustrates the decline in population for the district from 1930 to 2010 with the exception of the 1960's. At that time the Glasgow air Force Base, located fifteen miles north of the City of Glasgow, in Valley County, was under construction and was being utilized by the United States Air Force. Construction and military jobs provided temporary relief from unemployment and a decline in population. The table illustrates the decline in population per county over the past ten year period. As noted below the district lost 44% of its population base between 1930 and 2010.

Population of Counties in Great Northern EDD 1930 – 2010

	Montana	Daniels	McCone	Roosevelt	Sheridan	Valley	Garfield	District
1930	537,606	5,553	4,790	10,672	9,869	11,181	4,252	46,317
1940	559,456	4,563	3,798	9,806	7,814	15,181	2,641	43,803
1950	591,024	3,946	3,258	9,580	6,674	11,353	2,172	36,983
1960	674,767	3,755	3,321	11,731	6,458	17,080	1,981	44,326
1970	694,409	3,083	2,875	10,365	5,779	11,471	1,796	35,369
1980	786,690	2,835	2,702	10,467	5,414	10,250	1,656	33,324
1990	799,065	2,266	2,276	10,999	4,732	8,239	1,589	30,101
2000	902,195	2,017	1,977	10,620	4,105	7,675	1,279	27,673
2010	989,415	1,751	1,734	10,425	3,384	7,369	1,206	25,891
	9.7%	-13.2%	-12.3%	-1.8%	-17.6%	-4.0%	-5.7%	-44%

In comparison to the decline in overall population the American Indian population has increased with the greatest concentration in Roosevelt County. The following table illustrates the changes in racial composition. In 1960 the total American Indian population was 3,373 or 8% of the total. In 1990 the total was 6,198 or 22% and in 2010 the total American Indian population was 7,126 or 27.5%.

Racial Characteristics of the District's Population				
(2010 Census)				
	Non Native American		Native American	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Daniels	1,714	97.9%	37	2.1%
McCone	1,730	99.6%	7	.4%
Roosevelt	4,128	39.6%	6,297	60.4%
Sheridan	3326	98.3%	58	1.7%
Valley	6,647	90.2%	722	9.8%
Garfield	1,201	99.6%	5	.4%
Totals	18746	72.5%	7126	27.5%

The median age fluctuates between counties with the youngest on the Fort Peck Reservation or Roosevelt County. The following table illustrates the changes in median age between 2000 and 2010.

Median Age Comparison						
	Roosevelt	McCone	Daniels	Sheridan	Valley	Garfield
Median Age 2000	32.3	42.4	47.0	45.1	41.7	41.6
Median Age 2010	31.6	48.9	50.4	50.3	46.4	46.4
Difference	-0.7	+6.5	+3.4	+5.2	+4.7	+4.8

Income Distribution

Over the last 34 years income growth in the GNDC service region has been slower than the State of Montana and the slower than the nation. Per capita income fluctuates between counties. The per capita income for the district is significantly lower than the State of Montana or the nation as illustrated. The median household income is lower in the Great Northern Development Corporation EDD than in the State of Montana or the United States.

Income and Poverty Status			
	Per Capita Income 2010	Median Household Income 2010	Percent Below Poverty
Daniels	24,737	38,125	14.1
McCone	23,265	48,167	8.6
Roosevelt	17,821	37,451	21.5
Valley	24,305	42,050	10.1
Garfield	22,424	42,955	10.7
Sheridan	26,537	39,578	14.5
State of Montana	23,836	43,872	14.5
United States	27,334	51,914	13.8

Source: U.S. Census 2010

Labor Force and Employment

From 1970 to 2004, 217 jobs were lost in the Great Northern Development Corporation EDD. From 1970 to 2004, the majority of job growth has been in proprietors. The following table illustrates that while all counties saw a decline in farm proprietors between 1970 and 2004, nonfarm proprietors increased.

Proprietorship				
Changes from 1970 to 2004				
	1970		2009	
	Nonfarm Proprietors	Farm Proprietors	Nonfarm Proprietors	Farm Proprietors
Valley	713	851	962	709
McCone	175	578	231	377
Roosevelt	685	818	893	654
Daniels	310	567	325	401
Sheridan	542	857	563	592
Garfield	151	318	211	237

The following table shows that the number of jobs on a region wide basis has increased since 1970. Most of that growth has occurred within the last five years. Oil exploration and other energy development is moving easterly into Montana from North Dakota. It can be expected the trend will continue over the next 20 years.

Wage and Salary Jobs			
Changes from 1970 to 2012			
	1970	2012	% Change
Valley	3791	3627	-0.4%
McCone	729	1119	53.5%
Roosevelt	2969	4139	39.4%
Daniels	744	808	0.9%
Sheridan	1281	1892	0.5%
Garfield	497	652	0.3%

Unemployment is difficult to accurately measure in the Great Northern Development Corporation region. Several of the counties do not have Job Service offices and those who cannot find employment leave the region. The April 2012 unemployment statistics follow.

- * United States 8.1%
- * State of Montana 6.3%
- * McCone County 2.9%
- * Roosevelt County 7.5%
- * Garfield County 2.7%
- * Daniels County 3.2%
- * Sheridan County 2.9%
- * Valley County 4.4%

Source: Montana Department of Labor

Financial Resources

The District's private lenders and financial institutions report adequate capital for commercial loans. National and international resources are available for business development in the Great Northern EDD.

Total Assets in 2012

	Total Assets
Circle, Montana	
➤ McCone County Federal Credit Union	\$49,281,179
➤ Wells Fargo Bank Montana (Branch of Billings)	\$364,120,000
Culbertson, Montana	
➤ First Community Bank (Branch of Glasgow)	\$17,122,000
➤ Richland Federal Credit Union (Branch of Sidney)	\$60,592,841
Fort Peck, Montana	
➤ Fort Peck Community Federal Credit Union	\$9,765,712
Froid, Montana	
➤ First Community Bank (Branch of Glasgow)	\$12,464,000
Glasgow, Montana	
➤ First Community Bank	\$141,633,000
➤ Independence Bank (Branch of Havre)	
➤ Valley Bank of Glasgow	\$28,530,000
➤ Wells Fargo Bank Montana (Branch of Billings)	
Hinsdale, Montana	
➤ First Community Bank (Branch of Glasgow)	
Jordan, Montana	
➤ Garfield County Bank	\$27,209,000
Medicine Lake, Montana	
➤ Daniels-Sheridan Federal Credit Union (Branch of Scobey)	
Plentywood, Montana	
➤ Montana State Bank	\$44,368,000
➤ Rocky Mountain Bank (Branch of Billings)	\$386,324,000
➤ Stockman Bank of Montana (Branch of Miles City)	\$1,042,257,000
Poplar, Montana	
➤ Independence Bank (Branch of Havre)	\$297,560,000
Scobey, Montana	

➤ Daniels –Sheridan Federal Credit Union	\$57,609,584
➤ Independence Bank (Branch of Havre)	\$297,560,000

Wolf Point, Montana

➤ First Community Bank (Branch of Glasgow)	\$157,194,000
➤ Western Bank of Wolf Point	\$54,199,000
➤ Wolf Point Federal Credit Union	\$9,729,618

Local Municipalities

Counties in Montana are limited in the debt they can incur based on the market value of the county. A summary of the borrowing power of GNDC counties follows.

<u>County</u>	<u>Market Value</u>		<u>Debt Limitation</u>
Daniels	\$181,846,061	x 2.50%	\$4,546,152
Garfield	\$190,657,587	x 2.50%	\$4,766,440
McCone	\$246,139,808	x 2.50%	\$6,153,495
Roosevelt	\$459,343,691	x 2.50%	\$11,483,592
Sheridan	\$318,913,530	x 2.50%	\$7,972,838
Valley	\$535,053,798	x 2.50%	\$13,376,345

Source: Montana Association of Counties

The Counties Taxable Value fluctuates annually. Counties budgets are based on the taxable value of the county for that particular year as illustrated below. All values are General Fund and do not include any tax increment values.

<u>Co#</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>For Fiscal Year 2011</u>	<u>Percent Change</u>
37	Daniels	5,625,018	-0.8%
50	Garfield	5,367,291	-5.2%
41	McCone	7,460,615	-2.3%
17	Roosevelt	23,868,536	14.8%
34	Sheridan	10,419,330	3.6%
20	Valley	23,777,587	6.7%

Source: Montana Association of Counties

The following table demonstrates one of the challenges facing each of the District's member governments. The eroding tax base increases the costs of local municipalities to provide basic services to its citizens.

Government Name	Taxable Value		General Fund Mills Levied	
	Mill Value 2006	% Change Mill Value 2001-2006	Gen Fund Mills 2006	% Change Gen Fund Mills 2001-2006
Daniels County	4754.45	-5%	70.32	44%
Scobey	720.9	-12%	148.8	23%
Garfield County	4822.8	-4%	28.43	0%
Jordan	218.7	-2%	120.6	25%
McCone	5844.9	-6%	53.2	27%
Circle	557.6	-3%	209.2	16%
Sheridan	8211.0	-4%	73.8	35%
Plentywood	1331.2	-20%	187.5	33%
Roosevelt	24838.5	7%	33.17	38%
Culbertson	437.7	-5%	137.0	14%
Poplar	353.2	-25%	175.0	36%
Wolf Point	1330.7	-16%	148.2	33%
Valley	24731.7	0%	45.3	44%
Glasgow	2557.5	-18%	231.0	23%

Infrastructure and Services

Public Services and Facilities

Montana Dakota Utilities, Sheridan Electric, Northern Electric Co-op, Valley Electric Co-op and McCone Electric meet the electrical needs of the Great Northern Development Corporation EDD. Montana Dakota Utilities provides natural gas with private carriers supplying propane or fuel oil in some locations. Utility costs are reasonable in northeastern Montana as compared to other locations. The capacity is available to accommodate additional business in the region.

Mid-Rivers Telephone and NeMont Telephone Cooperatives service the areas telephone needs with Internet and interactive telecommunications available through both. ADSL, redundant Internet service and cell phone coverage are available. Telecommunications infrastructure is seen as an asset and stepping-stone to economic development in the region.

The Missouri River and Fort Peck Lake, through filtration systems, provides water to the cities of Glasgow and Culbertson. Other towns in the district have deep-water wells. While water supplies are adequate, the quality is substandard. Most communities maintain filtration systems to reduce the amount of iron and manganese. Most systems are also chlorinated.

Sewer systems, while adequate, are aging. According to a 1996 U.S.D.A. Rural Development survey water and/or sewer systems are needed in many of the rural communities. Several are currently upgrading those systems.

The Dry Prairie Water District is in the construction phase and will supply water to the northern most portion of the GNDC region. Dry Redwater plans to distribute water to the southern part of the region.

Education

Northeastern Montana K-12 classrooms are small, offering the student individual attention with a feeling of security. Montana students rank higher than the national average in both ACT and SAT scores. In 1999 the National Average in verbal skills was 505 in verbal communications and 511 in math skills (SAT Test Results). Montana students scored 545 in verbal skills and 546 in math skills. The National Average ACT score was 21.0. Montana's average score was 21.8.

Post secondary educational opportunities are an important component of economic development. Technology such as the Internet, satellite communications and interactive television have made it possible to work with educational institutions to offer students, previously unable to access education, new opportunities. This technology has opened the door for rural education and made it possible to obtain a variety of degrees.

The State of Montana currently has seventeen universities and community colleges. Among them, five offer distance learning for college credit. Montana State University (Havre, Billings and Bozeman), Rocky Mountain College and the University of Great Falls participate in these outreach programs.

Montana State University in Bozeman offers distance learning through interactive video conferencing with Masters Degrees available in Math and Science. Montana State University in Billings offers associate and bachelor degrees in counseling and education. The Fort Peck Community College, with campuses in Poplar and Wolf Point, adds a wide variety of courses and curriculum. Fort Peck Community partners with fellow universities and recently added Masters' programs in some fields to their catalogue. Fort Peck Community College has expressed a willingness to train workers in specialized fields.

Health Care

With the exception of Glasgow, Plentywood and Wolf Point, many rural hospitals in the region are acute care facilities who partner with larger providers such as Deaconess Hospital in Billings, Montana. McCone County has a Medical Assistance/Nursing Home facility in Circle. The Daniels County Hospital/Nursing Home is located in Scobey and maintains a 6-bed facility along with a 48-bed nursing home.

Roosevelt County Medical Center and Nursing Home is located in Culbertson and Trinity Hospital in Wolf Point. The Bureau of Indian Affairs maintains a facility in Wolf Point and Poplar. Sheridan Memorial Hospital, located in Plentywood, maintains an eighteen-bed hospital and a 77-bed nursing home.

Francis Mahon Deaconess Hospital located in Glasgow, Valley County, maintains a 48 bed acute care facility accredited by JCAHO. Francis Mahon has 230 employees including nine physicians consisting of two family practice physicians, an internist, an OB/GYN specialist, an Urologist, two radiologists, an orthopedic surgeon and a general surgeon. Francis Mahon is a well equipped facility that provides primary and secondary care services to residents in Northeastern Montana. Glasgow also provides nursing home care in a 98-bed facility.

Assisted living facilities provide an additional option for the elderly and in recent years have extended care to those who do not wish to live alone and maintain a residence but are not ready to move to the nursing home. Assisted living facilities can be found in Wolf Point, Glasgow and Plentywood.

Transportation

Transportation within the district consists of a network of Federal, State and local highways and roads; east-west passenger and freight rail service; and daily air service between Glasgow/Billings and Wolf Point/Billings.

Although the District is not served by the Interstate system, existing highways are in good condition. The Montana Department of Transportation has improved most of U.S. Highway 2 between the North Dakota State Line and Malta. North-south travel has been improved in recent years with new construction between Circle and Scobey including a newly constructed Missouri River Bridge at Wolf Point. The District continues to encourage improvement of the highway system.

Air service is provided by Great Lakes Airlines, with assistance from the Federal Essential Air Service Program. Daily service from Wolf Point to Billings and from Glasgow to Billings offers fliers the ability to connect to direct flights to Denver, Salt Lake City, Chicago, Minneapolis, Helena and other Montana cities. In addition, private air charter services are available at several locations within the district with airports in all communities.

Railroads have played an important role in the development of the west and continue to provide a daily service. Amtrak's "Empire Builder", passenger train stops in Wolf Point and Glasgow with service to points east and west.

Wolf Point is the division point for both the western and central zones. Therefore, passenger service is more affordable for those wishing to travel within these zones. This savings increases the number of passengers boarding at Wolf Point.

Private carriers provide trucking services for grain, cattle and sheep. Bob's Pickup and Delivery, Molerway Freight, Federal Express and United Parcel Service deliver smaller freight to the customer's door.

Industrial Sites

Industrial sites are located at A&S Industries in Poplar, Looking Eagle Manufacturing in Wolf Point, the Industrial Park in Glasgow, St. Marie, the Chamber acreage in Wolf Point and the Montola safflower processing plant in Culbertson. Other sites are available but undeveloped in several towns within the districts.

Housing

All indications are that housing is in short supply, especially along the eastern most portion of the region. Oil exploration in both North Dakota and Montana has resulted in work camps and higher than normal rental rates and housing prices. It should be noted that employers are purchasing homes for employees, dilapidated houses are being utilized and housing purchase prices along with rental rates are increasing daily. The average rental rate was approximately \$350.00 for one-bedroom apartments one year ago but has doubled and in most cases tripled. Moderate priced two or three bedroom homes were priced between \$50,000 and \$70,000 but are now selling for \$150,000 to \$200,000. The housing shortage is most difficult for those on a fixed income or families providing daily services to the communities. For example teachers, nurses and other service workers are forced to compete with oil field workers wages.

Through various federally funded programs the housing stock has been improved in many communities. Glasgow, Wolf Point, Froid, Westby, Nashua, Poplar, Medicine Lake and Circle have improved housing stock through these programs with efforts continuing throughout the region. The Fort Peck Indian Reservation continues to improve the housing conditions of the Native American population through the Fort Peck Housing Authority.

Planning and Development

The Fort Peck Tribes employ full time planners and complete strategic planning activities on a regular basis. Most other planning services such as Capital Improvement Plans, Housing Plans, Comprehensive plans, and sub divisions or platting is provided by private consulting firms. Most cities and counties are not zoned.

In 1996 the Great Northern Development Corporation completed a five county housing needs assessment. This was the first effort within the State of Montana to complete a regional housing survey. In 1998 Great Northern completed an Overall Economic Development Strategy, recently renamed Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. In 2002 and in 2007 the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the district was rewritten. An annual CEDS report is completed by the district and submitted to the U.S. Economic Development Administration.

PART III

Potential for Economic Growth

Potential for Economic Growth

Assumptions

National and regional trends have a profound effect on the rural economy and potential for growth. The following assumptions set the stage for economic growth in northeastern Montana.

- Agricultural employment along with the number of farms and ranches in the district and nation continues to decline as farms become larger and consolidation occurs.
- Oil, gas and coal production historically does not provide a solid basis for development. The boom and bust cycles provide temporary relief for the retail businesses but do not support a sustainable economy.
- Population trends include a return of the Native American to the reservation and an out migration of the labor force. Young persons leave the district to obtain an education and do not return.
- As residents of the district become more mobile, local business finds its area of competition expanding.
- Retail and wholesale business is being replaced by information and service business.
- Land and buildings are being purchased by out-of-state recreationists.
- Alien certifications for employment are increasing.
- Conservation easements/wetlands are increasing
- The American dollar is not as strong as it once was.
- Energy costs are increasing.
- Cost of living for basic needs is increasing
- Infrastructure of communities is aged and deteriorating
- Available or suitable permanent housing is aging and limited

Constraints on Economic Growth

The Great Northern Development Corporation EDD has historically faced a steady decline in the economy. However, the current conditions of the District are relating to the beginning impact phase of the incoming oil industry. The existing historical economic devastation has been a long term, continual process with the increasing needs of a fast paced growth and limited capital resources. Most of these problems or constraints to development are beyond the ability of the district to influence directly. The district does, however, have the ability to provide resources and assistance to the communities and private sector.

1. Housing

Residents of the district view available housing as a major constraint to economic development. Available housing is aging and limited due to deteriorating inventory and a sharp demand of living space caused by the oil industry exploration within the District. The results of the limitations are creating increased prices for real estate purchases and rental rates. Ultimately causing the existing labor force and employers challenges to earn or provide sustaining competitive livable wages.

Some instances of the issues are where rental rates have gone from \$475.00 to \$1150.00 for a three bedroom house. In another instance, a four bedroom that rented for \$500.00 is going to \$2000.00. Generally speaking, rental rates have doubled to tripled. Additionally Motel occupancy rates have increased sharply.

2. Infrastructure

Water and sewer systems throughout the district are reaching age limits of systems as well as maximum capacity levels of use. With some communities facing rapid increases of population growth and lack of investment capital, availability of service is limited and difficult for the existing tax base to support needed changes to existing systems.

The communities have begun addressing the needs of water through the region with the Dry Prairie Water System and the development of the Dry Red Water Rural Water System. However, sewer systems throughout the region as still being operated with lagoons that are outdated and reaching capacity limits.

3. Transportation

Local residents see transportation issues as another major constraint to economic development. Availability of transportation options and high costs of moving the product to commercial centers adds to the cost of production. While trucking firms have provided some relief from the dependence on the railroad and the high freight rates, transportation continues to add significant cost to businesses located in northeastern Montana.

Passenger travel is another constraint to economic development for the district. Silver Airways offers air service within the District with Glasgow and Wolf Point the only points serviced through commercial channels. With limited flight times availability and costs, passengers often travel by other means to Williston, North Dakota (100 miles east of Wolf Point) or Billings, Montana (300 miles southwest of Wolf Point) to board.

As a state, Montana remains an awkward destination for many air travelers, due primarily to the hub system. Three main hubs serve the state; Salt Lake City, Denver and Minneapolis. Travelers often encounter delays in making connections to Montana due to a limited number of flights.

Bus service is not available within the district at present. The nearest bus service is Glendive, Montana, 100 miles southeast of Wolf Point.

4. Non-diversified Economy

For generations northeastern Montana's economy has been based on the production of agricultural commodities. Traditionally those products have included beef calves, sheep, Hard Red spring and winter wheat, durum wheat and a few feed grains such as oats, barley and hay. As production methods became more efficient and farms expanded, the young persons left the region to find educational and employment opportunities elsewhere. In 1930 there were 6,458 farms in the district, in 2007 there were 3,274.

Most recently, there has been a positive change in the attitudes of the ag. community. Irrigated areas have increased, adding a small amount of non-traditional crops to the equation. Farmers are experimenting with beans, corn, potatoes, onions and other crops. Ranchers who normally sold calves directly from their mother's sides are beginning to experiment with retained ownership and the development of back grounding operations. These changes are in the infancy stages, however, and time will tell if they are positive changes.

Outside of an agriculture based economy there are limited industries supporting the economy with the most recent increase related to oil production in the District. Which is historically referred to as a "boom and bust" economy.

5. Investment Capital

A long standing obstacle to economic growth has been the lack of venture or investment capital in the State of Montana. Local development businesses have a difficult time finding investment capital that will suit their needs. Studies have shown that one of the biggest deterrents to start up business success is under capitalization during various critical stages of development. It seems reasonable that an area of low per capita income would also lack equity to begin or expand new business. An aging population would naturally be reluctant to invest in long term commitments.

Potentials for Economic Growth

The Great Northern Development Corporation EDD has the potential to grow economically. When business develops the assets available within the region, success is possible. The following assets have the potential to grow northeastern Montana.

1. Telecommunications

Mid Rivers and Nemont Telephone Cooperatives provide broadband service, internet, cell phone coverage and interactive television throughout northeastern Montana. More urban areas envy the excellent service available in rural northeastern Montana.

2. Communities

Strong rural communities are an asset of northeastern Montana. Schools, medical facilities, a low crime rate, active volunteers, sense of pride and family values with a common sense approach to life was a source of pride in the region.

3. Tourism

Tourism potential includes capitalizing on available hunting, fishing, photography, dinosaur digs, working ranches, water activities on Fort Peck Lake and the many smaller lakes and rivers in the region, camping, visiting historic sites along the Lewis and Clark trail, the Outlaw Trail, Sitting Bull encampment and special events. The Fort Peck Interpretive Center and Fort Peck Paleontology Center are becoming destination points for travelers with a potential to develop into a State or National park.

4. Agricultural Commodities

An abundance of high quality raw agricultural products such as durum, hard red spring and winter wheat; malting and feed barley, beef cattle and oil seed crops are assets that continue to provide an opportunity for development in the district.

5. Real Estate

The region has a vast level of raw and underdeveloped property. There are large sections of open space with an opportunity for development.

6. Environment

The pristine environment and abundance of natural resources are assets that encourage growth in the Great Northern Development region. Clean air and an abundance of water, wind, sun, energy and other natural resources are strengths of the region.

7. Educational System

The Fort Peck Community College sets the standards for post secondary educational opportunities in northeastern Montana. Offering a variety of course studies and partnering with other providers, the Fort Peck Community College has two campuses, one in Wolf Point and another in Poplar with out reach programs available in other communities. The Montana State University, University of Montana, Rocky Mountain College and others are providing outreach services to the rural areas.

PART IV

Goals and Objectives

Development Strategy

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Each year, in the early spring, the Great Northern Development Corporation hosts a Planning Summit. The summit is an opportunity for elected officials, the general public and the board of directors to review the expectations of Great Northern, develops criteria for selection of projects and refine the goals for the future. Prior to the Planning Summit held spring, 2012, staff of the Great Northern Development attended public meetings throughout the region. During the meetings the members of the public were informed of the access to Great Northern services and an opportunity to provide input of the community needs in for preparation for the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.

Great Northern's regional goals are designed to be flexible enough to evolve and reflect new directions and opportunities that might be identified mid-term. All the district goals are reviewed annually in the CEDS Reports and Updates for their continued appropriateness and are reaffirmed as the direction for the coming year. The goals that are listed here suggest the general direction and thrust of the 2012 CEDS Committee.

Goals

As a result of the public meetings and planning summit the following goals were adopted:

- Carry out effective planning policies,
- Seek orderly and balanced economic growth,
- Strive for a balance between environmental protection and economic growth,
- Support improved services to the elderly and under served,
- Actively seek the most beneficial and expedient route to provide more job opportunities to the unemployed,
- Seek effective coordination among all public entities and promote productive working relationships with the private sector,
- Encourage and support local entrepreneurs as we seek to reverse out migration, and

Criteria for Inclusion in the Work Program

The Planning Summit provided the criteria for inclusion in the future work plan for the Great Northern Development Corporation EDD. All activities will be compared to the criteria prior to inclusion in the work plan. In reviewing possible projects, the Board of Directors will ask if the proposed activity will;

- Create or retain basic jobs,
- Expand the District's manufacturing and value-added base,
- Promote public-private partnerships that will benefit the District's residents, especially those who are unemployed, have low and moderate incomes or who have special needs,
- Development of sustainable communities,
- Expand markets for natural resources and agricultural products,
- Eliminate barriers to economic growth,

- Foster inter-governmental cooperation between all units of government affecting the District,
- Increase the per capita income of the participants, or
- Retain or increase the population base?

The selection of programs and projects that the Great Northern Development Corporation undertakes is a joint decision between district professional staff and the EDD Board of Directors who has the ultimate authority over the budget and work program for any given year. Additionally, board members can and do suggest ideas and areas of interest that they would like to see explored or that they feel will provide economic benefit either for a particular community or the region as a whole.

PART V

Implementation Schedule

Great Northern Development Corporation

Current Work Plan Matrix

Goal 1. Carry Out Effective Planning Policies

Work Item	Priority	Short Term 1-2 Years	Mid Term 3-5 Years	Long Term 5-10 Years	Lead Agency	Partners	Type of Assistance
Regional Needs Assessment	High	X			Roosevelt County & GNDC	MDOC, BSTF	Technical Assistance & Project Coordination
Update CEDS	High	X	X	X	EDA	GNDC	Prepare Plan
Housing Plan for Jordan	Medium	X	X		Town of Jordan	MDOC	Grant writing and plan development
Housing Plan for Scobey	Medium	X	X		Town of Scobey	MDOC	Grant writing and plan development
Affordable Housing Plan	High	X	X		GNDC	MDOC, USDA	Grant writing and plan development
Zoning & Subdivision Regulations	Medium	X	X		Local Governments	GNDC, MDOC	Technical Assistance & Project Coordination

Great Northern Development Corporation

Current Work Plan Matrix

Goal 1. Carry Out Effective Planning Policies

Work Item	Priority	Short Term 1-2 Years	Mid Term 3-5 Years	Long Term 5-10 Years	Lead Agency	Partners	Type of Assistance
Regional Water/Sewer Assessment	Medium	X	X	X	Local Governments	MDOC, RD	Technical Assistance
Tourism Infrastructure Assessment	Medium		X	X	Great Northern	Travel Montana	Technical Assistance
Promote EDA Programs	High	X	X	X	Great Northern	Local Governments	Newsletter & Brochures

Great Northern Development Corporation

Current Work Plan Matrix

Goal 2. Seek Orderly and Balanced Economic Growth

Work Item	Priority	Short Term 1-2 Years	Mid Term 3-5 Years	Long Term 5-10 Years	Lead Agency	Partners	Type of Assistance
Transportation Development Truck Bypass	High	X	X	X	Local Government	MDT	Technical Planning
Electrical System Development	Medium	X	X	X	Utility Companies	USDA	Technical Implementation
Workforce Retention	High	X	X	X	Local and Tribal Government	MDOC, SBDC, IWT	Technical Assistance
Regional Jail	Medium	X	X	X	Local Government	MDOC, EDA, GNDC	Technical Planning
Rail Service Availability	Medium	X	X	X	Local Government	Private Investors	Technical Planning

Great Northern Development Corporation

Current Work Plan Matrix

Goal 3. Strive for a Balance Between Environmental Protection and Economic Growth

Work Item	Priority	Short Term 1-2 Years	Mid Term 3-5 Years	Long Term 5-10 Years	Lead Agency	Partners	Type of Assistance
Brownfield Petroleum Assessment	High	X	X		Great Northern Development Corporation	U.S. EPA, SEMDC, EPEDC	Complete Phase 2 assessments of selected properties
Brownfield Hazardous Waste Assessment	High	X	X		Great Northern Development Corporation	U.S. EPA, SEMDC, EPEDC	Complete nine Phase 1 assessments and one Phase 2 assessment
Brownfield Revolving Loan Fund	Medium	X	X	X	Great Northern Development Corporation	U.S. EPA, SEMDC, EPEDC	Increase Revolving Loan Fund for Clean up

Great Northern Development Corporation

Current Work Plan Matrix

Goal 4. Support Improved Services to the Elderly and Under Served

Work Item	Priority	Short Term 1-2 Years	Mid Term 3-5 Years	Long Term 5-10 Years	Lead Agency	Partners	Type of Assistance
Senior Center	Medium		X		Local Government	GNDC	Technical Assistance
Emergency Response Systems	Medium		X		Local Government	Local Hospital	Technical Planning
Housing Rehabilitation	Medium		X		GNDC	USDA, HOME, MDOC	Technical Assistance

Great Northern Development Corporation

Current Work Plan Matrix

Goal 5. Provide Job Opportunities to the Unemployed and Under Employed

Work Item	Priority	Short Term 1-2 Years	Mid Term 3-5 Years	Long Term 5-10 Years	Lead Agency	Partners	Type of Assistance
Wind Energy Development	Medium	X			Local Cooperative	USDA, MDOC	Technical Assistance
Economic Development Finance	High	X	X	X	GNDC	SBDC, SBA, CDBG, Rural Development, Com. Lenders	Lending, Loan Packaging, Loan Administration
Wolf Point Green Refinery	Medium	X	X	X	Property Owner	Fort Peck Tribes, EDA, MDOC	Technical Planning, Lending, Loan Packaging
Alternative Energy Occ.	Medium	X			GNDC	Educational Institutions	Technical Assistance
Training Needs Assessment	Medium	X	X		GNDC	SBDC, EDA	Technical Assistance

Great Northern Development Corporation

Current Work Plan Matrix

Goal 6. Coordinate Efforts Among All Public and Private Entities

Work Item	Priority	Short Term 1-2 Years	Mid Term 3-5 Years	Long Term 5-10 Years	Lead Agency	Partners	Type of Assistance
Coordinate Efforts of all Public & Private Entities	High	X	X	X	GNDC	Fort Peck Tribes, Eastern Plains RC&D, LDC, Private Foundations	Project Coordination
Promote GNDC and EDA Programs	High	X	X	X	GNDC	News media, Local Radio, Newsletters, Social Media	Project Coordination
Develop Organizational Coalitions	Medium	X	X		GNDC	EPEDC, SEMDC, RED	Technical Assistance

Great Northern Development Corporation

Current Work Plan Matrix

Goal 7. Encourage and Support Local Entrepreneurs to Discourage Out Migration

Work Item	Priority	Short Term 1-2 Years	Mid Term 3-5 Years	Long Term 5-10 Years	Lead Agency	Partners	Type of Assistance
Encourage Commercial Entrepreneurship	High	X	X	X	GNDC	SBDC, SBA	Technical Assistance to 20 businesses
International Marketing	High	X	X	X	SBDC	Local Schools, Chamber of Commerce	Project Coordination
School Facilities Improvements	Medium		X	X	Local Schools	MDOC	Technical Planning
Alternative Financing	Medium	X	X	X	GNDC	Local Governments, MTCDC	Technical Assistance

PART VI

Evaluation

Evaluation

Performance Evaluation

The Great Northern Development Corporation manages a growing number of programs for our member entities, programs that typically include public sector financing. Our consistent policy is to assure compliance with the rules and regulations that govern these programs. Our organizational performance is continually evaluated by a variety of state and federal government agencies that have entrusted our District with fiduciary and performance responsibilities relative to the proper management of their specific programs. These evaluations include, but are not limited to, performance and financial audits, regularly scheduled reporting obligations and frequent communication with the respective agencies.

The District's effectiveness is also evaluated on an ongoing basis by our Board of Directors and CEDS Committee through communication by staff on the progress of current projects. Project updates occur through such means as Board of Director meetings, personal contacts, meetings of member entities, the Great Northern Development Corporation newsletters, annual report and the CEDS. Criteria by which we measure our performance is describes as follows.

Performance Measurements

- The level at which we comply with all EDA planning and technical assistance grant awards and administrative conditions.
- The number of jobs created or retained.
- Number and types of investments undertaken in the Great Northern Development Corporation EDD.
- Amount of private sector investment in the Great Northern Development Corporation EDD after implementation of the CEDS and the changes in the District's economic environment.
- The level and frequency to which District staff interacts with communities within the region to provide assistance toward mitigating identified infrastructure deficiencies.
- The level and frequency of participation by government, business and community leaders in projects and Board and CEDS committee meetings.
- The level at which the Great Northern Development Corporation meets the criteria established by the Montana Department of Commerce's Certified Regional Development Corporation Program.
- The level at which the SBDC program meets the annual counseling and training goals established jointly by the SBA, Montana Department of Commerce and the SBDC.
- The level at which the Brownfields Program meets the annual goals established by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

- The level at which each staff associated with specific programs meets performance goals.

Annual GPRA Report

In order to provide for strategic planning and performance measurement in the Federal Government, Congress passed the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) of 1993. The purpose of the GPRA was to improve the confidence of the American people in the capability of the Federal Government, by systematically holding Federal agencies accountable for achieving program results and improve Federal program effectiveness and public accountability by promoting new focus on results, service quality and customer satisfaction.

The Great Northern Development Corporation has prepared and submitted to the EDA an annual GPRA report that includes the following information.

- Number of economic development initiatives from the CEDS process implemented during the prior investment award project (fiscal year) that led to private investment and jobs.
- Category of each project: facility construction/rehab, technical assistance, infrastructure, planning, or other.
- How many of the projects were classified either as technology or brownfields.
- Number of investment funded by any source.
- A list of the economic development initiatives/projects.
- Estimated number of jobs created or retained as a result of the initiatives/projects.
- Estimated amount of private sector investment generated by initiatives/projects.
- Estimated amount of public sector investment generated by initiatives/projects.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Great Northern Development Corporation compares the annual work plan to actual accomplishments on a monthly basis with the Board of Directors. Periodic reports are submitted to partner funders. Annual reports are submitted to the U.S. Economic Development Administration. An annual audit is completed in the years that the Single Audit Act applies to the expenditures of the organization. Annual financial reviews are completed in the years that the Single Audit Act does not apply.

PART VII

Disaster and Economic Resiliency

Disaster and Economic Recovery and Resiliency Strategy

Montana Code Annotated (MCA) 10-3-103 defines the following:

(3) "Disaster" means the occurrence or imminent threat of widespread or severe damage, injury, or loss of life or property resulting from any natural or artificial cause, including tornadoes, windstorms, snowstorms, wind-driven water, high water, floods, wave action, earthquakes, landslides, mudslides, volcanic action, fires, explosions, air or water contamination requiring emergency action to avert danger or damage, blight, droughts, infestations, riots, sabotage, hostile military or paramilitary action, disruption of state services, accidents involving radiation byproducts or other hazardous materials, outbreak of disease, bioterrorism, or incidents involving weapons of mass destruction.

(7) "Emergency" means the imminent threat of a disaster causing immediate peril to life or property that timely action can avert or minimize.

In the event of a disaster, the Great Northern Development Corporation (GNDC), in conjunction with its regional partners, is prepared to facilitate planning and recovery efforts as outlined in the following strategy document. However, this brief strategy is in no way intended to undermine or replace existing federal, state, or local disaster plans. This document simply establishes the District's role in both pre- and post-disaster planning and recovery.

Phase I: Pre-disaster Preparedness

The GNDC supports and encourages its communities to:

- Engage in pre-disaster recovery and mitigation planning
- Regularly assess the community's risks and vulnerabilities
- Inventory and organize the community's recovery resources
- Engage in business continuity planning
- Ensure resources are available for the elderly and those with special needs
- Identify shelters
- Identify recovery partners, as well as the type of assistance and resources they can provide
- Establish a timeline for recovery activities (immediate, short-term, intermediate, and long-term)
- Develop and disseminate a community evacuation plan
- Establish a communication chain
- Engage the community's residents in the planning and recovery process

Regional Risks and Vulnerabilities

The GNDC region is vulnerable to a wide variety of disasters including, but not limited to, fires, flooding, chemical/biological warfare, dam failure, drought and extreme heat,

freeze events and extreme cold, earthquakes, hazardous materials, landslides, nuclear attack, tornadoes, vector-borne diseases, volcanic fallout, violence, and terrorism.

Recovery and Mitigation: GNDC Regional Challenges
Small population dispersed over a large area
Lack of comprehensive services
Isolation/lack of access
Limited options for transmitting information
Possibility for widespread interruption of services
High percentage of stationary, at-risk population (elderly)
Lack of economic diversity
Limited transit options
Limited incomes
Few liquid assets, significant amount of money tied up in land and equipment
Vulnerable infrastructure
Reliance on imported materials and food

Recovery and Mitigation Planning

Without being prepared for the complexity of redevelopment in a compressed timeframe following a major disaster, local officials may struggle with recovery decisions and miss opportunities for public participation in reshaping the community's future. To become more disaster-resilient, local governments should plan for what must happen after rescue and recovery operations are completed in order to return the community to normal or perhaps rebuild an even better community. Through a Post-Disaster Redevelopment Plan (PDRP or Plan), local governments can collaboratively create a long-term recovery and redevelopment strategy in pursuit of a sustainable community.

Plans identify policies, operational strategies, as well as roles and responsibilities for implementation that will guide decisions affecting long-term recovery and redevelopment of the community after a disaster. They emphasize seizing opportunities for hazard mitigation and community improvement consistent with the goals of local and regional comprehensive plans, with full participation from the area's citizens.

There are three principal benefits to having a well-developed Plan:

1) Faster and More Efficient Recovery

Without a comprehensive, long-term recovery plan, ad hoc efforts in the aftermath of a significant disaster will delay the return of community stability. Creating a process to make smart post-disaster decisions and prepare for long-term recovery requirements enables a community to do more than react, prompting post-disaster action rather than time-consuming debate. By identifying appropriate planning mechanisms, financial assistance, and agency roles and responsibilities beforehand, a community begins the road to recovery more quickly. Being able to show efficient and effective use of taxpayer dollars after a disaster is incredibly important for the public's perception of the recovery.

2) Opportunity to Build Back Better

A disaster, while tragic, can also create opportunities to fix past mistakes or leap forward with plans for community improvements. In the immediate aftermath of a disaster, local officials are under significant pressure to restore the community to its pre-disaster condition. Without a guiding vision, short-term decisions may inadvertently restrict long-term, sustainable redevelopment and overlook opportunities to surpass the status quo. A Post-Disaster Redevelopment Plan strengthens the recovery process, and communities benefit from assessing their risk levels and crafting a long-term redevelopment plan under “blue skies.” Local officials and the public can thoughtfully analyze and debate issues, linking redevelopment goals with other important community plans. Careful thought and planning achieves a more sustainable and resilient outcome than decisions made under emergency circumstances, compromised budgets, and political pressures.

3) Local Control Over Recovery

Developing a PDRP provides local government officials, residents, and businesses the opportunity to determine long-term redevelopment goals and develop policies and procedures that will guide redevelopment before well-intended outside agencies and non-government organizations rush to aid the community. While outside resources are needed and welcomed in a major or catastrophic disaster, a locally developed Plan will best channel those resources to effectively meet the community’s specific needs and goals. A Post-Disaster Redevelopment Plan will show outside agencies and donors that the community is prepared to play an active role in the recovery process and promote its capabilities to wisely use donated and loaned resources. There will always be rules and, occasionally, strings attached to external sources of funding, but a community that has researched the allowable uses of federal and state assistance can better work within their boundaries in an effort to fund projects that further local and regional redevelopment goals.

The GNDC’s communities participated in the region’s comprehensive planning process. PDRPs can identify disaster scenarios in which opportunities may be present to advance already-stated visions for these communities in a compressed timeframe.

Opportunities to Consider During Post-Disaster Redevelopment

- Disaster-resilient land use patterns
- Hazard mitigation construction techniques
- Energy-efficient buildings
- Healthy community design
- Affordable or workforce housing
- Alternative transportation networks
- Environmental preservation and habitat restoration
- Sustainable industry recruitment
- Regionally collaborative response systems

Tornadoes, wildfires, floods, and other disasters do not confine themselves to jurisdictional boundaries. Displaced residents, compromised infrastructure, changes in economic conditions, hazardous materials contamination, and degradation of sensitive environments are some of the impacts that can affect an entire region after a major disaster. When recovery is slow, neighboring communities also experience these impacts for an extended period of time.

A PDRP is designed to be used in any disaster, regardless of type, as long as the damage will require long-term redevelopment efforts. It is an all-hazards plan addressing disasters identified in each county's Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS) and each community's Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). As an economic development organization serving Carter, Dawson, Fallon, Prairie, and Wibaux Counties, the GNDC will respond accordingly, utilizing the resources and information outlined in the region's CEDS document. Therefore, counties are encouraged to incorporate PDRP strategies into their disaster planning documents.

Disaster Phases and Redevelopment

Disaster management is typically viewed as a cycle with overlapping phases: 1) pre-disaster mitigation and emergency management preparedness; 2) emergency response; 3) short-term recovery; and 4) long-term recovery and redevelopment.

Pre-Disaster Phase – Mitigation and recovery planning occurs during the pre-disaster phase (unless a community is struck by a disaster before planning is complete). Once a mitigation and recovery plan is adopted, preparatory activities should be implemented on an on-going basis during normal operations, which are sometimes referred to as “blue skies.” Plans should be tested prior to a disaster event, so that all stakeholders with a post-disaster implementation role are familiar with their responsibilities.

Emergency Response Phase –Emergency response activities are specifically addressed in a municipality's EOP and include immediate actions to save lives, protect property, and meet basic human needs. This is the shortest phase of the cycle, lasting only a few days in minor disaster conditions.

Short-Term Recovery Phase – The role of any plan during the short-term recovery phase is to begin organizing for long-term redevelopment activities and guiding short-term recovery decisions that may have long-term implications (e.g., placement of temporary housing or debris sites). Short-term recovery operations are addressed in EOPs, but a recovery plan can provide direction for transitioning to long-term redevelopment during this phase. The short-term recovery phase begins as the emergency response phase is winding down and will continue until critical services are restored. The duration of the short-term recovery phase depends on the severity of the disaster and the level of community preparedness.

Long-Term Recovery and Redevelopment Phase – A recovery plan is used most during this phase. Long-term recovery and redevelopment includes efforts to reconstruct and

enhance the built environment, as well as recover the economy, environment, and social systems. This phase begins as short-term recovery activities are accomplished and can last from a couple years for a minor disaster to five or more years for a major or catastrophic disaster.

Interaction with Other Plans

The objective of this “Disaster and Economic Recovery and Resiliency Strategy” is to guide the redevelopment decision-making process following a disaster in a manner consistent with local comprehensive plans (especially Future Land Use maps, where applicable), Local Mitigation Strategies, Emergency Operation Plans, and other relevant plans or codes, such as land development regulations. Each of these plans, and potentially others, has pre-existing policies or procedures that affect post-disaster redevelopment. For instance, local comprehensive plans include many policies that determine where and to what extent redevelopment can occur. Ultimately, the GNDC will help its counties and communities access the information and resources necessary for making post-disaster redevelopment decisions.



GNDC Region: Disaster and Emergency Services (DES) Contact Information

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Shelly Fogle- Garfield County
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406-485-2347

Dan Sietsema- Roosevelt County
400 2nd Ave. South
Wolf Point, MT 59201
406-635-6224

Curt Petrik- Sheridan County
100 West Laurel Ave.
Plentywood, MT 59254
406-765-2970

Rick Seiler- Valley County
501 Court Sq
Glasgow, MT 59230
406-228-6224

Phase II: Post-disaster Planning and Implementation Disaster Assessment

In the days and weeks following a disaster, the GNDC will be available to assist counties and communities:

- Assess the nature and magnitude of the disaster
- Assess the impact on both local and regional economies (business, industry sectors, labor market, etc.)
- Assess the impact on transportation and public infrastructure
- Assess the impact on housing, schools, and health care facilities

Develop and/or Implement Recovery Timeline

Based on the results of the disaster assessment, the GNDC will help regional partners and community leaders move forward with:

- Listing and prioritizing recovery activities to be performed
- Identifying resources (federal, state, local, and private sector) needed for each activity
- Determining the level and type of assistance needed
- Identifying roles and responsibilities
- Determining the timeframe for each recovery activity (immediate, short-term, intermediate, or long-term)
- Establishing recovery benchmarks

Implementing the Recovery Plan (long-term recovery)

In order to accomplish recovery activities quantified as part of long-term recovery, the GNDC is capable of:

- Identifying business, economic, and entrepreneurial rebuild initiatives
- Identifying and utilizing workforce initiatives to employ workers and rebuild the local economy
- Applying for funds from federal, state, and local programs
- Developing management plans to ensure the most effective use of funds

Prioritizing Areas to Focus Redevelopment

Limited time, funds, and materials are going to make simultaneous redevelopment of all damaged areas difficult.

Communities may want to encourage redevelopment in areas that correspond to their vision for the future and those less vulnerable to disasters by prioritizing and incentivizing development in these areas. The best way to build resiliency to disasters is to direct future development to safe locations, while minimizing or mitigating highly vulnerable types of development in hazardous areas. After a disaster, targeted sustainable redevelopment areas can provide immediate opportunities for redevelopment since they will have sustained less damage and can be prioritized for infrastructure restoration and expedited permitting. Allowing for rapid redevelopment in safe areas intended for increased future development will minimize vulnerable redevelopment and/or allow time to plan the sustainable reconstruction of areas severely impacted by the disaster. Designated priority recovery and redevelopment areas can also be used to locate temporary post-disaster facilities more efficiently that are consistent with future land uses.

Historic Preservation and Restoration

The loss of historic resources due to a disaster can have a major impact on the community. Some losses may be unavoidable, but others could occur accidentally during recovery operations if procedures are not in place to watch for these concerns. Historic

structures are particularly vulnerable to damage due to their age, and repair of these structures must meet certain requirements to maintain their character and historic designation. There may also be funding opportunities before or after a disaster for implementing mitigation measures to prevent further damage to historic resources. Engaging state and local historic preservation organizations in the planning and implementation process can ensure that the unique considerations involved with preserving and restoring historic structures and archeological sites are included in a community's recovery plan.

Reducing Disaster Vulnerability through Land Use and Development Regulations

The best practice for post-disaster redevelopment is to restrict rebuilding in hazardous locations and require mitigation where vulnerable redevelopment cannot be precluded. While this plan of action would ensure optimal community resiliency to disasters, it may be very difficult to achieve and may not be a good choice for the first action to be tackled when implementing any recovery plan. However, with careful consideration of the legal implications concerning property rights and extensive public outreach, there are many regulatory tools for increasing disaster resiliency that may be a possibility for the region, especially if pursued during the post-disaster "window of opportunity" for future reductions in disaster vulnerability. Potential regulatory methods could include reduced intensity or density of use, special permit requirements, increased setbacks from hazard sources (e.g., a waterway or building, etc.), hazard-specific site design requirements, and/or increased structural mitigation requirements. These methods could be implemented through policies instituting lower damage thresholds requiring nonconforming uses/structures to meet current standards (in certain zones or throughout the jurisdiction), zoning overlay districts, post-disaster specific land development codes, and/or special assessment districts to fund mitigation projects that benefit more than one property.

ECONOMIC REDEVELOPMENT

The ability of a local economy to rebound after a disaster dictates the success of the community's long-term recovery. The return of jobs, tourism, capital investments, and other indicators of economic health are dependent upon housing recovery, infrastructure restoration, environmental restoration, and social service provision. The involvement of the private sector in the post-disaster planning process is imperative for determining the priorities and actions that will be beneficial to restoring the local economy. Consideration must be given to the different obstacles that could potentially hinder economic recovery, such as those that small businesses will face, decisions large employers will have to make about whether to relocate, opportunities for sustainable diversification of the economic base, and job training and workforce recruitment needed to meet altered market conditions after a major disaster.

Resumption and Retention of Major Employers

Rapid resumption of existing major employers is key to a community's economic recovery after a disaster, especially as employment provides a reason for most residents to return and rebuild quickly. Typically, the major employers in the region are already going to have business continuity plans and will not need the basic disaster preparedness education necessary for smaller businesses. These companies are often able to work with local governments as partners in planning for post-disaster redevelopment and provide insight as to what government assistance they will need to ensure rapid resumption. Major employers may also have the means to assist in actions to support workforce retention if included in the planning process. While large company recovery assistance will vary, typically businesses located in hazardous areas or older structures may need assistance to reopen or relocate, temporarily or permanently, within the area.

If businesses do not feel a sense of connection to the community or fear that recovery will not be successful, there is a chance that they will relocate their company elsewhere after a disaster. This is especially the case for corporate headquarters and industries that are not location-dependent or whose location choice is tied to quality of life factors. Mitigation and recovery plans provide the private sector with confidence in the community's ability to continue providing the market environment necessary for conducting business. Some factors that may aid the retention of major employers include a high level of communication before and after a disaster about post-disaster redevelopment goals and expectations and/or incentives to ensure retention, if necessary.

Small Business Assistance

A "small business" is often perceived as a family-owned business that provides services solely to the local community. Small businesses comprise the majority of businesses in the GNDC region. Small businesses are more likely than large businesses to either never reopen after a major disaster or fail shortly after reopening. Several factors may be involved in these failures, including the extent of damage to a community, timing of reopening, and lack of financial reserves.

Short periods without cash flow can be damaging, and small businesses often find restrictions and loan arrangements overwhelming. The region's SBDC Director will be on-hand to help guide businesses through the redevelopment process. The GNDC also has access to a variety of RLF funds that may be available to businesses during post-disaster redevelopment. Loans are typically based on the pre-event business and tax returns of the firm and require extensive collateralization. Post-disaster market changes, however, may mean the company isn't able to do as well as it did pre-disaster, and the loan, even at below-market interest rates, sometimes becomes a burden to the long-term survivability of the business.

Workforce Retention

While trying to retain existing businesses, efforts must also address retaining the workforce that supports those businesses. Actions such as ensuring that schools reopen and childcare is available, allowing temporary on-site housing for employees, and

communication of a community's post-disaster plan can assist in getting employees back to jobs as soon as the businesses have reopened.

After a disaster, the market for certain businesses may decrease or be eliminated due to financial troubles or customer demand changes. However, other industries may provide employment opportunities, such as the construction industry, which will boom temporarily due to rebuilding needs. Workforce training programs are important to provide residents with appropriate skill sets to fill newly available positions due to recovery efforts and to adjust workforce skills to other industries that may take a more permanent hold in the community due to post-disaster business recruitment efforts. Providing locals with first preference for temporary recovery work is important for keeping workers from moving out of the area.

Physical Economic Redevelopment Projects

In some circumstances, opportunities may arise after a disaster to move forward with planned physical economic development projects or to create new projects that take advantage of post-disaster funding, available land, or public will. Economic development projects that are disaster-resilient and fill a need in the community after a disaster should be a priority for post-disaster funding. In addition, the community can prioritize projects that incorporate energy efficiency and other "green" building design considerations. Business districts can be prime locations to focus post-disaster redevelopment projects since these districts offer financial tools or incentives, such as tax increment financing, reductions on impact fees, and state tax incentives. Economic leaders can also consider ways to expand these business districts and leverage funding that would be available through disaster programs from several federal agencies, including the Community Development Block Grant program and Economic Development Administration disaster assistance program.

Opportunities to Sustainably Restore Economic Vitality

Retaining existing businesses is the first priority after a disaster; however, post-disaster redevelopment may also present an opportunity for businesses to assess their long-term applicability in the local market and take advantage of any changes in demographics or business incentives that may occur due to disaster impacts and an influx in outside funding to the area. For instance, a business that was already struggling before the disaster may need to rethink its business plan and use the disaster as an entrepreneurial impetus unless it happens to be engaged in one of the few economic activities that benefit from a disaster, such as the development industry.

Inevitably, some large and small businesses that bear the brunt of significant damage or indirect losses are going to fail or choose to relocate after a major disaster. This can affect the unemployment rate of the county if new businesses do not replace those that relocate. Ideally, a community would have a diverse spectrum of businesses so that if one industry sector is severely impacted by a disaster, the majority of the workforce will not be affected. Unfortunately, the GNDC region struggles with a lack of economic diversity, which means that in the event of a disaster the loss of one business could mean

the loss of all the local benefits provided by that employer/industry. Efforts to diversify the local economy with industries that are less vulnerable to disasters should be integrated into ongoing economic development activities. Industries targeted for attraction and incentive programs after a disaster should be those that will provide a more disaster-resilient and sustainable economy for the community and are appropriate for the post-disaster circumstances.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND PUBLIC FACILITIES

Restoration of infrastructure and critical public facilities after a disaster is a prerequisite for recovery – one that is addressed in local government and private utility and infrastructure companies' emergency response and short-term recovery plans. There are long-term redevelopment considerations for infrastructure restoration, however, that must be weighed in conjunction with land use, environment, housing, and economic redevelopment issues.

Taking advantage of opportunities to upgrade, mitigate, or even relocate infrastructure or public facilities after a disaster is critical. Advanced planning allows a community to make deliberate decisions about redevelopment that it may otherwise have had less opportunity to do during the post-disaster rush to rebuild. Decisions about infrastructure reconstruction will influence private redevelopment decisions, and using disaster repairs as an opportunity to include hazard mitigation allows a local government to lead by example.

There are many agencies, jurisdictions, and stakeholders involved in providing infrastructure, public facilities, and utility services. Before and after a disaster, these private and public entities need to establish communication and coordination procedures to ensure that long-term recovery and redevelopment occurs in an efficient and organized manner. Each agency or company should have its own recovery plan; however, if any opportunities for directing redevelopment are to be pursued then coordination and communication are critical.

Types of Infrastructure and Public Facilities to Address in Post-disaster Redevelopment Planning

A community's infrastructure is made up of a number of different systems and structures, each of which should be considered carefully:

- *Transportation systems* – The repair of roads, bridges, railroads, airports, and public transit is essential to establishing normal operations within a community. The repair of these and other types of infrastructure is often necessary for other redevelopment efforts to take place. Post-disaster redevelopment can be used as an opportunity to modify, improve, and add to existing transportation networks. Incorporating hazard mitigation into the repair and reconstruction of transportation facilities can ensure that when disaster strikes again, the infrastructure is better able to handle the impacts.

- *Potable water, sewer, and stormwater systems* – Damage to potable water, sewer, and stormwater infrastructure can weaken a community’s ability to recover. Like with other infrastructure, the community can take the opportunity to include hazard mitigation or other improvements during repairs. In cases of severe damage to infrastructure in highly hazardous locations, relocation could be considered. These opportunities may be missed if pre-planning is not conducted.
- *Power, natural gas, and telecommunications* – Recovery from a disaster cannot begin until major utilities, especially electricity, are restored.
- *Public facilities* – Rebuilding after a disaster provides an opportunity to mitigate future hazard impacts and build back a more resilient community. Public facilities, such as schools, libraries, and government offices must be rebuilt to current building codes. However, above-code hazard mitigation may also be a good investment, and post-disaster funding sources may allow these expenditures. Some public facilities in highly hazardous areas could potentially be targeted for relocation during pre-disaster planning.
- *Parks and recreation facilities* – While parks and recreation facilities are typically not a priority for recovery, they are important for regaining quality of life as part of long-term redevelopment. Park properties also are often used in staging recovery efforts, such as temporary vegetative debris storage.

Financing Infrastructure and Public Facilities Repair

When a community starts to make decisions about which structures to relocate after a disaster or which mitigation projects it should invest in pre-disaster, they should consider funding availability. Knowing where to prioritize spending requires some basic knowledge of what is covered under insurance policies, which projects will be eligible for federal reimbursement through the Public Assistance Program, which projects can be funded through grant programs, and what financial reserves can be targeted for grant matching funds or local investment. When a community begins to address its infrastructure issues as part of the initial planning process or as a pre-disaster implementation action, it can launch an assessment of county or municipal insurance policies to determine which facilities are covered and for what extent of damage. They can then use this assessment to make decisions about increasing coverage or financing repairs to uninsured structures. They can also determine whether mitigation enhancements would be covered under current policies and Public Assistance or whether additional funding would be needed.

Public Assistance: Improved and Alternate Projects

Occasionally an Applicant may determine that improvements should be made while restoring a damaged facility; or even that the public would not be best served by restoring a damaged facility or its function at all. FEMA refers to these projects respectively as improved and alternate. All requests for these projects must be approved prior to construction.

Possible Alternate Projects

- Repair or expansion of other public facilities;
- Construction of new public facilities;
- Purchase of capital equipment; and
- Funding of hazard mitigation measures in the area affected by the disaster.

Possible Improved Projects

- Relocation of public facilities;
- Using improved materials;
- Expanding capacity, and
- Rebuilding to higher codes and standards

Conclusion

In the event of a disaster, the GNDC is committed to:

- Providing local officials, business leaders, and other community partners with access to regional demographic, economic, and hazard vulnerability data
- Developing technical expertise and economic analysis tools for conducting initial disaster assessments and long-term economic impact analysis
- Establishing collaborative relationships with local government officials and non-government organizations that may provide data, funding, technical expertise, and other resources essential to intermediate and long-term economic recovery following a disaster event
- Offering grant writing expertise and technical assistance to regional and local entities, both for pre-disaster resiliency initiatives as well as post-disaster recovery efforts
- Establishing familiarity with traditional economic and community recovery funding sources, including resources for business development assistance programs, such as GNDC's existing Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) programs as well as private, nonprofit, and philanthropic resources
- Providing technical support to impacted businesses
- Encouraging concepts and principles of economic resiliency strategies into the existing planning and development plans and activities within the region
- Leveraging assets
- Offering a neutral forum to convene diverse stakeholders and facilitate discussion and planning initiatives around the issues of economic resiliency preparedness and recovery