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division of economic development & finance

# commerce matters

## Innovate ND Entry Deadline Approaching

The deadline for submitting creative business ideas in the Innovate ND competition is Jan. 31. Current and former North Dakotans and those entrepreneurs who will be enthusiastic about relocating to North Dakota are eligible and encouraged to enroll in Innovate ND.

Innovate ND is a comprehensive program that incorporates educational materials, training, entrepreneurial coaching and award money to the top selected business ideas in various categories.

A unique partnership was forged for Innovate ND with the Governor's office, UND Center for Innovation, North Dakota Department of Commerce, entrepreneurs throughout the state, and private companies vested in North Dakota's economic growth.

To enter your business idea, visit [www.innovatend.com](http://www.innovatend.com) to register. A \$100 fee is required to take part in the full program. For more information contact Bruce Gjovig at 701-777-3132. ●

## Get Your Community's Available Buildings Noticed

Many communities across North Dakota have commercial buildings available for rent or purchase. To help companies who are interested in locating or expanding in the state find space, the Division of Economic Development and Finance has made it a priority to finish an available buildings database. This information will be accessible through [www.growingnd.com](http://www.growingnd.com).

In order to build and maintain a comprehensive database, Commerce's research team needs economic developers to

submit a list of available buildings in each community, with brief descriptions and photos.

"This database has been on our 'to do' list for much too long and we have made it a priority for the first part of the year," said ED&F Director Paul Lucy. "More than 80 percent of site searches begin by companies looking for an existing building. We need to get on that radar screen."

To get your buildings on the database, send the information to [jquast@nd.gov](mailto:jquast@nd.gov). ●



Many communities across the state have buildings available. This building in Beulah is a 14,400-square-foot building and is one of five in that community alone that could be filled with a new business.

## Quarterly New Professionals Orientation Schedule Set

This year the Department of Commerce will again host introductory sessions each quarter for statewide personnel who have a vested interest in our various programs. Setting quarterly meetings facilitates better planning and scheduling on behalf of our staff and attendees. Please mark your calendars with the following dates:

Tuesday, February 20

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Tuesday, May 22

Tuesday, August 21

Tuesday, November 13

Here is the tentative agenda. There may be some adjustments depending on attendees and requested needs.

**8:45 a.m.** -- Welcome – Shane Goettle, Commissioner

**9 a.m.** -- Paul Govig, Director – Community Services Division

**10:15 a.m.** -- Sara Otte-Coleman, Director – Tourism

**11:30 a.m.** -- Lunch – Attendees and Senior Staff

**1 p.m.** -- Jim Hirsch, Director – Workforce Development

**2:15 p.m.** -- Paul Lucy, Director – Economic Development & Finance

**3 p.m.** -- Office building tour if needed.

If there is a new volunteer, professional developer or someone in your community who may benefit from this meeting, please encourage him or her to contact Pamela Trhlik at [ptrhlik@nd.gov](mailto:ptrhlik@nd.gov) or 701-328-5371 to sign up for a session.●

## Native American Companies Receive Valuable Support With Government Contracting

The survey results are in. Native American companies are “very satisfied” with the services offered by the North Dakota American Indian Business Development Office, an innovative program operated by the Impact Foundation with funding from the North Dakota Department of Commerce.



Executives from over two dozen Native American-owned companies were recently surveyed regarding the importance

and value of having a program dedicated to helping their organizations secure government contracts. The results were overwhelmingly positive.

The vast majority of those surveyed (85 percent) rated the importance of having an office dedicated to Native American business development as “very important.” Additionally, the overall level of satisfaction with services offered by the American Indian Business Development Office was very high. Seventy five percent of those surveyed were “very satisfied” with the services offered, which include:

- ◆ electronic notification of contracting opportunities;
- ◆ assistance with applications to government programs such as GSA schedules and SBA certification;
- ◆ support with marketing, branding and internet strategies
- ◆ access to state and federal resources;
- ◆ facilitating partnerships between Indian and non-Indian businesses; and
- ◆ workshops, seminars and educational resources.

To learn more about the office, contact Christine Martin-Goldsmith at 701-328-5309 or reach her toll free at 866-432-5682.●

## Partners In Marketing Dollars Still Available

Approximately \$55,000 is still available through the Partners in Marketing program for promotional events, marketing materials, website development and other special projects that support primary sector economic development. During the 2005-2007 biennium the Commerce marketing department had nearly \$250,000 available for partners to tap into.

To date 21 counties and 20 cities have participated in the program. Several grantees represent regional efforts of city and

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county economic development organizations. The funds are available through June 30, 2007. Please contact Tracy Finneman at 701-328-5352 or [tfinneman@nd.gov](mailto:tfinneman@nd.gov) for questions about Partners in Marketing. ●



The McHenry County Jobs Development Authority took advantage of the Partners in Marketing program through Commerce's marketing department to help fund the design of its new website. Check out how McHenry County JDA is helping to promote its communities and quality of life at [www.mchenrycountynd.com](http://www.mchenrycountynd.com).

## Rural Economic Development Day Scheduled For Feb. 8 In Bismarck

The Champion REAP Alliance has organized an event to provide information to legislators on the efforts of rural economic development organizations. You are invited and encouraged to participate in this event which will be held at the Capitol on Feb. 8.

The organizers would like to fill the Great Hall with booths from economic development organizations that showcase the successful projects and efforts going on in rural North Dakota.

The theme is "Many Partners Creating Opportunities for Rural North Dakota Communities" and Champion REAP Alliance encourages all participants to incorporate this theme in the display. The goal is to stress the use of partnerships as a means of accomplishing the goal of growth for rural North Dakota.

This is a great opportunity for rural economic development organizations to get the word out to state legislators. Please feel free to contact Laura Every, Champion REAP Alliance Director, if you have any questions at 701-438-2660. ●

## EDND Legislative Agenda Available

The final EDND 2007 Legislative Agenda has been posted on the EDND web site at [www.ednd.org](http://www.ednd.org).

The Legislative Agenda has been included in a booklet, along with other information about EDND, which was distributed to legislators on Monday, Jan. 8.



In addition, the EDND board members had a meeting with the majority and minority leaders of the House and Senate on Wednesday and Thursday, Jan. 10-11, to present the legislative agenda and discuss issues relevant to EDND.

If you would like more information about the meetings with legislative leadership or about the booklet, please contact Carol Goodman at [goodman@utma.com](mailto:goodman@utma.com) or Carissa Richter at [ednd@ednd.org](mailto:ednd@ednd.org) or 701-222-0929. ●

## Economic Development Roundtable Scheduled

Mark your calendars for Thursday, May 17, for the Spring economic development roundtable to be hosted at Commerce from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. ●

## Focus on Economic Development With Paul Lucy

Last year a national survey identified the most effective marketing strategies in the economic development profession with the following as the top four: website, marketing with a regional or state organization, familiarization tours and public relations.



Paul Lucy  
ED&F Director

These marketing strategies, along with many others, are necessary for a local community, region or state entities to carry out a comprehensive marketing plan.

With the continued growth and use of the internet, relative to economic development activity, it is important to have a website that is interactive, always changing and geared toward the needs of the end user. Currently, ED&F is discussing redesigns for [www.growingnd.com](http://www.growingnd.com) so the site will be more user-friendly and provide access to more information. The information needs to be pertinent and valuable, not only for out-of-state companies that are looking for an expansion location, but also for our existing in-state companies as well as North Dakota's economic development partners and entrepreneurs.

One of the primary uses of an economic development website by out-of-state users is to find information on available buildings and sites, plus find statistical and demographic information on communities and regions. Eighty percent of site location searches begin with a search for an existing building, and typically these searches begin at the state level. The site selection process is relying more heavily upon the use of the internet to identify available property. Therefore it is necessary that [www.growingnd.com](http://www.growingnd.com) have this function, because we are missing out on getting many communities on company consideration lists.

Our research team is currently developing a tool that will provide an on-line, searchable database of available buildings and sites throughout North Dakota. Along with this building availability tool, another function will be added to give searchers access to statistical and demographic GIS data as it relates to the building location, community, region or other search criteria. However, these new website tools will only be as useful as the information that goes into them.

This is where ED&F needs active support and participation from our partners across North Dakota. In the very near future many of you will receive correspondence from ED&F staff regarding how these new search tools will be structured, and we will request that you provide information to populate the building inventory and databases. The reason for having this information on [www.growingnd.com](http://www.growingnd.com) is to provide the services required of the users and to ultimately drive business development opportunities out to communities and people of the state. ●

## Commerce Bi-Annual Report Available Online

The North Dakota Department of Commerce reported this week to the state lawmakers on the agency's goals, objectives, activities, measurable results and benchmarks on key economic indicators. The report is mandated by law as a way for state leaders to formally track economic progress in the state.

The Commerce bi-annual report outlines progress the agency has made on its mission to attract, retain and expand wealth in North Dakota. To view the report, visit [www.growingnd.com](http://www.growingnd.com) and select Data Center/Publications/Annual Report. ●

