



Request for Proposals
Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
and COVID-19 Recovery and Resiliency Addendum
For Great Northern Development Corporation

Submit Proposals to:

Executive Director
Great Northern Development Corporation
233 Cascade St.
Wolf Point, MT 59201
tmatejovsky@gndc.org

RFP Submittal Deadline: 4:00 PM (MST) April 1, 2022

Announcement

Great Northern Development Corporation (GNDC) is requesting proposals to complete a regional Community Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), a five-year planning document that reflects both current economic and demographic conditions of the region and future goals and objectives by the industry sector.

Background Information

The CEDS is a planning document submitted every 5 years, and updated annually, to the US Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA), as well as other federal and state agencies that provide grants and loans to the region for various infrastructure and economic development projects. The GNDC CEDS encompasses a six-county region including Valley, Daniels, Sheridan, Roosevelt, McCone & Garfield Counties.

The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) contributes to effective economic development in America's communities and regions through a locally-based, regionally driven economic development planning process. Economic development planning – as implemented through the CEDS – is not only a cornerstone of the U.S. Economic Development Administration's (EDA) programs, but successfully serves to engage community leaders, leverage the involvement of the private sector, and establish a strategic blueprint for regional collaboration. The CEDS provides the capacity-building foundation by which the public sector, working in conjunction with other economic actors (individuals, firms, industries), creates the environment for regional economic prosperity. Simply put, a CEDS is a strategy-driven plan for regional economic development. A CEDS is the result of a regionally driven planning process designed to build capacity and guide the economic prosperity and resiliency of an area or region. It is a key component in establishing and maintaining a robust economic ecosystem by helping to build regional capacity (through hard and soft infrastructure) that contributes to individual, firm, and community success. The CEDS provides a vehicle for individuals, organizations, local governments, institutes of learning, and private industry to engage in a meaningful conversation and debate about what capacity-building efforts would best serve economic development in the region.

The CEDS must include the following:

- Summary of background information
- SWOT analysis
- Strategic direction/Action plan
- Evaluation framework
- Economic and Disaster Resilience

Scope of Work

Using GNDC's current CEDS framework, the final scope of services to be provided by the selected Consultant will be developed in partnership with GNDC's CEDS Committee. The scope may include the following elements:

- Updating demographic, economic, and industry analysis
- Work with the GNDC staff & CEDS committee to develop an updated demographic analysis for the region.
- Provide administrative support to schedule meetings and track attendees.
- Stakeholder Engagement: Assist GNDC staff & CEDS committee with the identification of stakeholder groups and/or individuals for the purpose of input and discussion. Develop and facilitate, in coordination with staff, a public input strategy (number, frequency, time, location, etc.) to ensure the greatest level of participation.
- Update & develop current Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT): List strategic issues based on stakeholder input and developed in coordination with the CEDS committee that can serve as the basis for formulating goals, objectives, and strategies.
- Plan Development: In partnership with staff, develop the CEDS report. The CEDS report should be an attractive, engaging, and accessible document that outlines a clear approach to moving the needle for the region. An Executive Summary, as well as supplemental reports providing a more detailed analysis of demographic and economic trends, historical reports, meeting summaries, and development projects, will be developed as appendices. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion strategies are important to our region and must be included to the fullest extent possible.
- Planning for and implementing resilience through specific goals or actions to bolster the long-term economic durability of the region

Additional Information to guide proposal development:

- Attachment A - Work Plan Timeline for an example of a CEDS outline of tasks and projected time frame.
- Attachment B - CEDS Checklist

Economic Recovery and Resiliency Addendum:

- Summarize short-term and long-term impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic by analyzing local economic development problems, opportunities, strengths, and weaknesses in the regional makeup of human, infrastructure, and economic assets, and determine problems and opportunities posed by external and internal forces affecting the regional economy.
- Anticipate risk, evaluate how that risk can impact key economic assets, and build a responsive capacity. Identify potential downturns, both in particular industries in the region's economy and from the national or international economy which impact demand locally, and other external shocks, either natural or man-made.
- Determine strategies for resiliency in the face of future similar pandemics/economic disasters. Include planning for and implementing resilience through specific goals or actions to bolster the long-term economic durability of the region.

Deliverables and Performance Expectations

- Monthly progress reports
- A completed draft of the CEDS and the economic recovery and resiliency addendum must be provided to the CEDS committee for review, comment, and recommendation for adoption at the GNDC Board of Directors meeting in October 2022. The draft plan will include goals, objectives, and strategies that assist stakeholders in diversifying and expanding the economic base of the region.

Proposal Evaluation Criteria

- Qualification/experience of prime and sub-consultant(s) with studies of similar scope and size
- Demonstrated knowledge of economic development principles and trends, especially in rural and/or eastern Montana
- Demonstrated knowledge of current EDA requirements for CEDS
- Experience in leading collaborative workshops, focus groups, and outreach events
- Past record of performance on similar projects
- Proposed cost of the study and demonstration of commitment for meeting the project schedule
- Completeness and quality of proposal submission

Conditions of the Proposal

- GNDC reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and to negotiate portions thereof.
- Proposals that address only part of the qualifications contained in the Request for Proposal will not be considered.
- GNDC reserves the right to select any proposal.
- The selection of the proposal will be based on how well the applicant addresses the Application Criteria.
- It is anticipated that the contract will begin no later than April 17, 2022, and will end with final submittal to EDA. 10% of the total contract will be withheld from final payment until the CEDS has been accepted by EDA (but not more than 45 days), and the Consultant will be expected to make any revisions to the final document as may be required to meet EDA's approval requirements.

Regarding Direct Costs

Costs of printing, advertising and other such costs will be the responsibility of GNDC. The Consultant should consider costs related to travel within the region, telephone expenses, and other such items in their budget and cost proposal.

RFP Selection Schedule

RFP Issue Date:	March 14, 2022
Deadline for Proposals:	April 1, 2022
Review by RFP Committee:	April 8, 2022
Consultant Selected:	April 11, 2022
Contract Commencement:	April 17, 2022

Proposal Deadline:

Proposals will be accepted until 4 PM, March 14, 2022. Any proposals received after this date and time will not be considered. To submit a proposal electronically, email to: tmatejovsky@gndc.org.

Contact:

Tori Matejovsky
Executive Director, GNDC
233 Cascade St.
Wolf Point, MT 592010
tmatejovsky@gndc.org

Questions:

Please submit questions in writing via email to tmatejovsky@gndc.org.

Resources

<https://www.cedscentral.com/>

<https://www.statsamerica.org/ceds/>

www.gndc.org

Attachment A - CEDS Work Plan

List of tasks to complete the CEDS	Proposed Timeline	Actual Timeline
Kickoff meeting/call with GNDC Executive Director & GNDC Board President	M/D/Year	M/D/Year
Kickoff meeting with CEDS Committee/further establish the committee with recommended names from various segments of the business community and people who are representing the economic interests of the region	M/D/Year	M/D/Year
Review of the outdated CEDS document or other plans that are available to assist with the information contained in the CEDS	M/D/Year	M/D/Year
Develop a background of the economic conditions of the region, this will include a discussion of the economy, population, geography, workforce development and use, transportation access, resources (resources meaning funding sources; State, Local, Federal, Foundations, local development corporations, chambers, loan funds, other partners, environment, and (See EDA's Environmental Guidelines for a full list of item's to cover regarding environment), other pertinent information. (Other items covered could be political climate, education, health, housing, natural disasters in the region, economic clusters, pandemic/COVID-19)	M/D/Year	M/D/Year
Analysis of economic development problems and opportunities	M/D/Year	M/D/Year
Incorporate relevant material from other government sponsored or supported economic development plans from applicable state workforce investment strategies	M/D/Year	M/D/Year
Conduct a review of literature on past, present and projected future economic development investments in the region	M/D/Year	M/D/Year
Review, identify and analyze (conduct a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats (SWOT) analysis) for the region	M/D/Year	M/D/Year
Develop a section discussing the relationship between the community in general, and how the private and public/tribal sector will implement the CEDS		
Identify economic clusters within the region	M/D/Year	M/D/Year
Conduct and facilitate public meetings, and focus groups which include all stakeholders from the region		
GNDC staff will develop goals and objectives clarifying regional expectations to resolve economic problems using resources of the area	M/D/Year	M/D/Year
Develop a section which identifies strategic projects, programs, and activities to accomplish and implement the goals and objectives of CEDS	M/D/Year	M/D/Year
Develop an action/implementation plan that includes goals, objectives, priorities, timelines, parties responsible – Lead entity, potential funding sources, performance measures (this	M/D/Year	M/D/Year

is typically in a table format)		
Establish reasonable performance measures	M/D/Year	M/D/Year
Describe all existing vital projects in the region	M/D/Year	M/D/Year
Review the CEDS checklist to ensure all areas are present in the CEDS	M/D/Year	M/D/Year
Develop the Draft CEDS	M/D/Year	M/D/Year
Provide the new CEDS for review and comment and make it available to the public for a period of 30 days	M/D/Year	M/D/Year
Review public comments and recommendations to incorporate comments received into the CEDS. Document and summarize the comments that were made.	M/D/Year	M/D/Year
Discuss any final changes and revisions to the CEDS based on public comments received	M/D/Year	M/D/Year
Develop the Final CEDS for submission to the Board for approval	M/D/Year	M/D/Year
Obtain approval from the Board	M/D/Year	M/D/Year
GNDC staff submit CEDS to EDA via Grants OnLine (GOL)	M/D/Year	M/D/Year
After approval of the CEDS, GNDC upload the CEDS to the CEDS Resource Library (District's only) http://www.statsamerica.org/ceds/Default.aspx	M/D/Year	M/D/Year

Attachment B - CEDS Checklist

**COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (CEDS)
REVIEW & ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST (for EDA-funded CEDS)**

Planning Organization Information

Name:	
Address:	
POC Name, Title:	
POC Telephone, Email:	

Organizational Review & Approval Process *(to be completed by Organization)*

Strategy committee roster included/attached:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Copy of CEDS provided to affected Regional Commission:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA
Dates of public review & comment period (at least 30 days):	
Date CEDS adopted by organization's governing body:	
Attached documentation of public comment and adoption:	
• Governing body adoption of CEDS (minutes or resolution):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
• Verification of 30-day public comment on the CEDS:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
• Copy of all public comments received on the CEDS:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
• Explanation from the Planning Organization stating how comments were incorporated into the final CEDS:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
CEDS self-assessment checklist completed & attached (optional):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

EDA Review & Approval Process *(to be completed by EDA)*

Reviewer Name, Title, RO:	
Reviewer Phone, Email:	
Date CEDS Received by EDA:	
Date CEDS Review Completed:	
CEDS Review Determination: <input type="checkbox"/> Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Deficient	
Date CEDS Review Letter & Checklist Sent to Organization:	
CEDS, Review Letter, & Assessment Checklist Filed at RO:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
CEDS Receipt, Review Notification, & Status Entered in OPCS:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (CEDS) REVIEW & ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST (for EDA-funded CEDS)

Overview

“A CEDS is a strategy-driven plan for regional economic development. A CEDS is the result of a regionally owned planning process designed to build capacity and guide the economic prosperity and resiliency of an area or region.” This definition comes from the “Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Content Guidelines: Recommendations for Creating an Impactful CEDS,” published by the Economic Development Administration (EDA) in 2015. It frames the nature and purpose of a CEDS. The checklist below is an optional assessment tool intended to help area/regional development organizations prepare viable strategies that meet EDA’s guidelines. Likewise, it is a tool for EDA staff to use in reviewing and approving a CEDS. Although it is not a required form, it is a useful tool.

Structure

The checklist follows the structure of EDA’s CEDS guidelines. The assessment elements relate to the stated requirements and recommendations contained in the guidelines. **Requirements, which are noted as such, are few. Most of the elements are recommendations.**

Instructions

The following instructions will optimize the use of this checklist for CEDS reviews and self-assessments:

- Check the appropriate box to indicate whether or not the element is present and has been satisfactorily addressed. For certain elements not applicable to the area/region, indicate “NA.”
- Where requested, note the location of the element in the CEDS by showing the section or page number(s) where the topic is addressed.
- Include comments to clarify the review, as needed, or to indicate deficiencies to be addressed, or to acknowledge exemplary treatment of the element.

Self-Assessment

It will be helpful for a CEDS-preparing organization to conduct a self-assessment of its strategy using this CEDS checklist. In so doing, the organization should be able to identify and address deficiencies prior to submitting the document for EDA review and approval. It will also be helpful for the organization to submit a copy of its self-assessment with its CEDS.

References

“Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Content Guidelines: Recommendations for Creating an Impactful CEDS,” <http://www.eda.gov/ceds/>

EDA Regulations: 13 C.F.R. § 303.7; http://www.eda.gov/pdf/edas_regs-13_cfr_chapter_iii.pdf

CEDS REVIEW & ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

1. OVERVIEW

In accordance with EDA's regulations and guidelines, the following sections must be included in the CEDS document:

Summary Background	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Location:	
SWOT Analysis	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Location:	
Strategic Direction/Action Plan	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Location:	
Evaluation Framework	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Location:	

Comments:

The CEDS must incorporate the concept of economic resilience (i.e. the ability to avoid, withstand, and recover from economic shifts, natural disasters, the impacts of climate change, etc.)

The CEDS meets this requirement.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Location:	
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Comments:

2. CONTENT

The CEDS meets the following general criteria:

It was developed with broad-based community participation.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Location:	
It is readily accessible to regional stakeholders.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Location:	
It is usable to stakeholders as a guide to the regional economy and for action to improve it.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Location:	(Include website, if posted)
Seen through the lens of economic resiliency, the four required elements (see 'Overview' above) logically build upon each other to result in a coherent, targeted document.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Location:	

Comments:

2-A. SUMMARY BACKGROUND

The “Summary Background” section meets the following criteria:

Answers the question, “Where have we been?” and presents a clear understanding of the local economic situation, supported by current, relevant data. Yes No

The information is presented in a clear and concise manner and can be easily understood by the general public. Yes No

Data presentation allows for clear, relevant connections to the SWOT analysis and strategic direction. Yes No

Comments:

The “Summary Background” section provides information in the following areas that affect the regional economy, as applicable:

Demographic & socioeconomic data	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Location:	
	<input type="checkbox"/> NA		
Environmental, geographic, climatic, and cultural information	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Location:	
	<input type="checkbox"/> NA		
Infrastructure assets that relate to economic development	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Location:	
	<input type="checkbox"/> NA		
Emerging or declining clusters or industry sectors	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Location:	
	<input type="checkbox"/> NA		
Relationship of the area’s economy to the larger region or state	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Location:	
	<input type="checkbox"/> NA		
Factors that directly affect economic performance in the area (e.g. workforce, innovation assets, industry supply chains, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Location:	
	<input type="checkbox"/> NA		
Other factors that relate to economic performance (e.g. housing, health services, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Location:	
	<input type="checkbox"/> NA		

Comments:

The CEDS includes content that meets the following related criteria:

It is a vehicle that promotes the integration of economic development with other regional plans (e.g. sustainability, transportation, land use, housing, environmental protection, etc.)

Yes No

Location:

It identifies opportunities for the integrated use of local, state, private, and federal funds.

Yes No

Location:

The research for the CEDS includes a review of the long-term trends of the area.

Yes No

Location:

Comments:

2-B. SWOT ANALYSIS

The "SWOT Analysis" (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) section meets the following criteria:

Answers the question, "Where are we now?" and identifies the critical internal and external factors that speak to the region's unique assets and competitive positioning.

Yes No

Considers economic resiliency, specifically, factors that can ensure the long-term success, viability, and durability of the regional economy.

Yes No

Location:

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Comments:

The "SWOT Analysis" assesses a wide variety of regional attributes and dynamics, including the following specific areas and tools:

State of the regional economy

Yes No

Location:

Regional clusters

Yes No

Location:

External trends and forces

Yes No

Location:

Workforce considerations

Yes No

Location:

Spatial efficiencies/sustainability

Yes No

Location:

Broadband needs

Yes No

Energy needs	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Location:	
Natural hazards	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Location:	
Equitable development	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Location:	
Partners for economic development	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Location:	
Resources for economic development	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Location:	

Comments:

2-C. STRATEGIC DIRECTION/ACTION PLAN

The “Strategic Direction/Action Plan” section meets the following criteria:

Answers the questions, “Where do we want to go?” and “How are we going to get there?” by applying the SWOT analysis.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Includes a vision statement, goals, and objectives.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Location:
Includes an action plan for the implementation of the stated vision, goals, and objectives.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Location:

Comments:

The Vision Statement, Goals, and Objectives meet the following criteria:

They respond to the analysis of the area’s development potential and problems (i.e. SWOT analysis).	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Location:	
The process used to create the vision statement involved broad community participation.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Location:	
The draft vision statement was widely circulated for review and comment to ensure maximum stakeholder engagement.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Location:	
The goals are statements of broad outcomes	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		

and general intentions that build upon the vision statement.

Location:

The goals reflect the desires of most regional stakeholders, are realistic and are limited to a manageable number.

Yes No

Location:

The objectives are specific, measurable, concrete, and support the attainment of the stated goals.

Yes No

Location:

The goals and objectives are prioritized, with consideration for the factors outlined in the CEDS guidelines.

Yes No

Location:

Comments:

The Action/Implementation Plan meets the following criteria:

It must be clearly linked to the prioritized goals and objectives stated in the framework for strategic direction.

Yes No

It identifies and describes a limited number of key projects with the highest priority and potential for regional impact.

Yes No

Location:

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Comments:

The Action/Implementation Plan describes explicitly how the region will work together to achieve its goals and measurable objectives by including the following elements:

An outline of the steps required to take each selected high-priority activity from inception to successful completion.

Yes No

Location:

A roster of the key individuals and institutions that will be responsible for implementing and supporting these steps.

Yes No

Location:

A reasonable estimate of the costs associated with implementing the activity.

Yes No

Location:

A list of the integrated funding sources (public, private, non-profit) to support the

Yes No

Location:

costs.

A realistic time frame for execution (i.e. implementation schedule), with relevant benchmarks and performance measures that address overall impact.

Yes No
Location:

The identification of prioritized activities includes broad-based participation from regional stakeholders, including those affected by the proposed activities and those that can ensure their success.

Yes No
Location:

Comments:

2-D. EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

The “Evaluation Framework” section meets the following criteria:

It answers the questions, “How are we doing?” and “What can we do better?” by applying the SWOT analysis.

Yes No

It cascades from the strategic direction and action plan.

Yes No

Performance measures are identified to evaluate the progress of activities in achieving the vision, goals and objectives.

Yes No
Location:

Performance measures go beyond job creation to address linkages to other important factors, such as conditions the region needs to reverse or create, and what regional assets can be leveraged.

Yes No
Location:

Comments:

2-E. ECONOMIC AND DISASTER RESILIENCE

The “Economic Resilience” section addresses the following two approaches in harmony with the principles outlined in EDA’s CEDS Content Guidelines:

“Steady State” Initiatives: Planning for and implementing resilience through specific goals or actions to bolster the long-term

Yes No
Location:

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economic durability of the region.

“Responsive” Initiatives: Establishing information networks among the various stakeholders in the region to encourage active and regular communications between the public, private, education, and non-profit sectors. The “Economic Resilience” section demonstrates how the region serves as a source of information to deal with an economic challenge and a convener of regional stakeholders to gather data and encourage collaboration in the post-disruption stage.

Yes No

Location:

Comments:

3. FORMAT

The structure and presentation of the information in the CEDS takes the following factors into consideration:

Keeps the audience in mind with respect to the length of the document, the presence of an executive summary, the placement of supporting data, etc.

Yes No

Communicates creatively by having a professional and appealing look and feel, by including attractive and informative graphics and photos, and by using both hard-copy and electronic formats.

Yes No

Thinks beyond the document by finding ways to use it to engage stakeholders in meaningful conversations and to leverage its relevance and use through social media.

Yes No

Comments:

4. PREPARATION

The preparation of the CEDS included the following key steps and elements:

A strategy committee, which broadly represents the main economic interests of the region, was formed to facilitate the planning process, and to develop and update

Yes No

Location:

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the CEDS.

The CEDS documents how the planning organization collaborated with its diverse set of stakeholders in the formation of its strategy committee and the development of the CEDS.

Yes No

Location:

The planning organization has or will collaborate with EDA and other entities funded by EDA (e.g. University Centers, Economic Development Districts, Tribes) on the development and implementation of the CEDS.

Yes No

Location:

Comments: