



# GREAT NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (CEDs) AND ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND RESILIENCY ADDENDUM (ERRA)

## 1. TABLE OF CONTENTS

## 2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## 3. BACKGROUND

- *Who are we? What do we do? What do we make? What resources do we have?*

## 4. SWOT ANALYSIS

- *What are our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats and how do they serve as guideposts for charting a path for our future?*

## 5. VISION-GOALS-OBJECTIVES

- *What's our vision? What are our priorities, goals and objectives, based on community input?*

## 6. STRATEGIC DIRECTION and ACTION PLAN

- *How are we going to achieve our goals and objectives? What are our strategies for moving forward? What programs and initiatives are in place? Which action items need to be accomplished?*

## 7. ACTION PLAN TABLE

- *Who are our implementation partners? How are our strategies and action items measured?*

## 8. EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

- *How do we evaluate the inputs and the outcomes?*

## 9. ADDENDUM: ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND RESILIENCY

- *How do we increase our resiliency and achieve economic stability?*



## GREAT NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (CEDs) AND ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND RESILIENCY ADDENDUM (ERRA)

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Northeastern Montana is a unique place, one of the most remote locations in the continental U.S. The six counties of Daniels, Garfield, McCone, Roosevelt, Sheridan and Valley and the people who live in the area served by the Great Northern Development Corporation (GNDC) have withstood challenges and threats—persevering despite the location, lack of a diversified economy, history of oppression and natural disasters including floods and droughts.

The six-county region makes up more than twice the size of New Jersey, yet with 9.36 million less people. On average, there are fewer than two people for every 640 acres.

Recent U.S. Census data shows an overall increase in population since 2010, and there are now more residents under 18 years of age than ages 65+. Recent statistics also note less people in the labor force and a lower unemployment rate but also an increase in the poverty rate.

Highest average wages are earned by those employed by local utilities, financial services, communications equipment and services, and business services. The top industry clusters employing the most people include: government, local education and training, local health services, and local hospitality establishments. Additional data shows retail trade being another top industry sector.

Housing is a challenge in some counties, and less than 10% of the total housing stock has been built in the last 10+ years. Appearances are another often-cited concern with some towns throughout the area having abandoned, burned down or dilapidated buildings, excessive debris and aging infrastructure.

In a region-wide survey that had more than 400 responses, plus a community-specific survey with 100+ responses, community members were asked what they liked most about living here. The top responses focused on the people and the rural lifestyle. Although residents are often challenged by the limited work opportunities, shopping options, healthcare specialties and lack of supplies immediately available—ultimately often resulting in a higher cost of living, they also come together and support one another.

As noted in the community-wide survey, community members want the future of the area to include:

- Thriving main streets and communities with more shopping options
- Economic development including more businesses and services, as well as manufacturing and other industries
- More activities for kids and families including clubs and other non-sports related organizations

To make their desired future a reality, they noted that support is needed, including:

- Funding and investors
- Community and individual commitment, involvement and input
- Economic development with an engaged, available and knowledgeable workforce
- Opportunities for people who grew up here to stay here
- Positive, can-do attitude—entrepreneurial spirit, open-mindedness
- Access to quality healthcare

Community members also commented on what didn't work well during the COVID-19 pandemic. They noted that closing down businesses and schools—not being able to conduct life as usual—made things difficult. They also called out the supply chain issues and food shortages, and not being set up to be self reliant in times of crises. Another issue during the pandemic were workforce issues (i.e., paying people to stay home) and the workforce shortages when businesses reopened.

To create resiliency and prepare for the next disaster or pandemic, community members noted three key components: leadership and collaboration; financial and disaster planning; and continued community support, involvement and pride.

A one-size-fits-all approach doesn't work for this area of the United States and this area of Montana. There are even differences throughout the six counties, each having their individual strengths and weaknesses.

In order to achieve success in Northeastern Montana, GNDC's vision is to sustain and grow healthy and thriving communities by promoting and providing professional services and resources that empower community members to reach their economic goals and improve their lives.

Based on community input, matched with limited resources, the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for GNDC is focusing the next five years on:

- Collaborating with counties, communities, businesses, organizations, private and public entities and other organizations in the region to make the most of existing resources
- Working with entrepreneurs and small businesses
- Building on the area's strengths including agriculture
- Supporting initiatives that focus on retaining and/or attracting people who have existing

connections to the area

These priorities will help GNDC to achieve the three goals outlined in this CEDS:

- Goal 1: Support Small Businesses and Entrepreneurs in Northeastern Montana
- Goal 2: Encourage and Promote Economic Growth and Stability
- Goal 3: Positively Impact Area Residents' Quality of Life Including Access to Housing

Northeastern Montana does not need to—and should not attempt to—reinvent ourselves. Our best strategy is to take what's working and build on those successes. For example, we believe that it is wiser to focus on encouraging diversification of our local economies through value-added agriculture opportunities rather than distancing ourselves from our agricultural heritage. This overall approach provides Northeastern Montana with the opportunity to build on the foundation needed to withstand disasters and develop resiliency.



## GREAT NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (CEDS) AND ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND RESILIENCY ADDENDUM (ERRA)

### BACKGROUND: KEY TAKEAWAYS

*Who are we? What do we do? What do we make? What resources do we have?*

There are multiple components to the area served by the Great Northern Development Corporation (GNDC) with differences and similarities between its six counties. As a whole, its characteristics include:

- A large area with few people.
- Rural communities and recreational places.
- Served by U.S. Route 2, Montana highways, railways and regional airports.
- Overall increase in population since 2010.
- More residents under 18 years of age than ages 65+.
- Less people in the labor force and lower unemployment rate.
- Per capita income has been increasing over time.
- Nearly 50% of personal income is from non-labor income.
- Increase in poverty rate.
- 95% of residents have a high school degree or equivalent.
- 89% are covered by health insurance.
- Less than 10% of the housing stock has been built in the last 10+ years.
- 92% increase in farming, fishing and forestry occupations since 2015.
- Largest industries: public administration, educational services, retail trade, accommodation and food services, and wholesale trade.
- Top industry sectors with the most jobs: government, retail trade, and accommodation and food services. Top industry clusters employing the most people: government, local education and training, local health services, and local hospitality establishments.
- Most new jobs: real estate, wholesale trade, and finance and insurance.
- Highest labor earnings industry sectors: government, retail trade, transportation and warehousing. Highest average wages are earned by those employed by local utilities, financial services, communications equipment and services, and business services. Most new earnings: farm, wholesale trade and retail trade.
- Less proprietors in 2020 vs. 2010, but an increase in total proprietor income.
- Improved economic distress criteria compared to 2017 CEDS calculations.
- Multiple public and private funding sources exist, with caveats.

## DISTRICT PROFILE

**A large area with few people.** GNDC serves six counties in Northeastern Montana: Dawson, Garfield, McCone, Roosevelt, Sheridan and Valley and includes the Fort Peck Indian Reservation. The 18,000+ square mile area is home to 16 towns, plus other unincorporated communities, and a total of 26,486 people, according to the 2020 U.S. Census. The most populated county is Roosevelt County with 10,821 people as of 2021. The least populated county is Garfield County with 1,209 residents.

	Daniels	Garfield	McCone	Roosevelt	Sheridan	Valley	TOTAL
<b>2021 Population</b>	1,686	1,209	1,718	10,821	3,527	7,537	26,498
<b>Population Change (since 2010)</b>	-3.7%	0.2%	-0.9%	3.8%	4.2%	2.3%	2%
<b>Households (2020)</b>	856	437	818	3,248	1,543	3,324	10,226
<b>Median Age (2020)</b>	51.4	40.1	49.4	30.4	43.7	30.4	N/A
<b>Change in Median Age (since 2010)</b>	4.5%	-13.8%	6.5%	-5.0%	-12.6%	-1.6%	N/A
<b>Labor Force (Annual Avg. 2021)</b>	875	742	968	4,330	1,784	4,044	12,743
<b>Unemployment Rate (Annual Avg. 2021)</b>	1.9	2.6	1.8	4.2	3.3	3.1	3.4
<b>Per Capita Personal Income (2020)</b>	\$64,205	\$44,812	\$48,924	\$41,531	\$61,236	\$54,556	\$49,702
<b>Median Household Income (2020)</b>	\$50,312	\$45,892	\$46,755	\$43,256	\$50,658	\$46,766	N/A
<b>Poverty Rate (2020)</b>	11.2	15	14.5	23.8	11.8	13.4	
<b>High School Diploma or More (% of Adults 25+, 2020)</b>	95.4%	96.5%	94.1%	88.9%	93.4%	93.5%	
<b>Bachelor's Degree or More (% of Adults 25+, 2020)</b>	23.1%	20.9%	15.9%	18.7%	25.3%	19.3%	

Source: StatsAmerica, August 2022; Headwaters Economics, August 2022

## GEOGRAPHY

**Rural communities and recreational places.** GNDC's district is primarily considered a rural area. The largest town is Glasgow, Montana, located in Valley County, with a population of 3,202. In 2000, Daniels County was considered the most rural county in the continental United States as measured by the [Index of Relative Rurality](#). Other counties that have been listed as some of the U.S.'s most rural counties include Garfield and [McCone](#).

The physical geographical aspects are predominantly rolling plains with rivers, lakes, reservoirs, and mountains (not exceeding 4,100 feet). 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 1930s 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 Reservoir and Recreation Area, located on the Missouri River, is a major feature of the area. Fort Peck Lake is 240,000 acres in size and has 1,600 miles of shoreline, more shoreline than the State of California. Fort Union Trading Post National Historic Site, Medicine Lake National Wildlife Refuge, and the Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge are three of the region's nationally protected areas. Adjacent to Fort Peck Lake, the Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge is the largest refuge in the continental U.S.

Three of GNDC's counties border Canada and its Saskatchewan province, and two of the counties border the northwest corner of North Dakota.

## TRANSPORTATION ACCESS

**Served by U.S. Route 2, Montana highways, railways and regional airports.** The area is reached by U.S. Route 2, running east to west. Major Montana highways in the region include Highways 5, 13, 16, 22, 24, 25, 42, 59, 117, 200 and 248. There are no interstate highways that serve the counties of GNDC; however, Amtrak's Empire Builder and the BNSF Railway travel along the U.S.'s northernmost rail line with stops in Roosevelt and Valley Counties.

Airports in the region offering commercial service include the Glasgow-Valley Airport and the L.M. Clayton Airport in Wolf Point, both providing flights to Billings, Montana. Other general aviation airports are located throughout the area.

## POPULATION

**Overall increase in population since 2010.** GNDC serves a population of 26,486 people. As noted by University of Minnesota's "Rewriting the Rural Narrative," rural landscapes are changing and that trend holds true for the counties that GNDC serves.

Although the district has been home to as many as 46,317 people, according to the 1930 Census, those numbers had been primarily decreasing in the last 80+ years. However, as a whole, the area has experienced an overall increase of 2% in population since the 2010 Census when there was a total of 25,869 residents in the district. Sheridan and Roosevelt Counties had the largest net increases, with Daniels and McCone Counties being the only counties that experienced a net decrease.

As noted by data obtained from Headwaters Economics, the 2010 to 2021 population growth can be attributed to both natural change (74.6%) and net migration (24%). According to "Rewriting the Rural Narrative," Montana's new residents are coming for the following reasons: moved primarily for a job (35%) and lived previously in the community (28%).

## POPULATION BY AGE, GENDER AND RACE

**More residents under 18 years of age than ages 65+.** Roosevelt County has the youngest median age of 30.4 years old; Daniels County has the oldest median age of 51.4. The total area has more residents under 18 (27%) than ages 65+ (18%). The percentage of people ages 45-64 has decreased from 28.8% of the population in 2010 to 24.3% in 2020.

Among the 26,486 residents in the area, the males and females are nearly equal. As of the 2020 Census, 50.4% were male, and 49.6% were female. Daniels and McCone Counties have more males (54%) than females (46%), whereas Roosevelt County has more females (51%) than males (49%).

The majority of the population in the area is white except in Roosevelt County where 59% of the population is American Indian, according to the 2020 Census.



Population by Age, 2020	Value	Pct. of Total	U.S.	Pct. of Total
Total	26,486	100%	326,569,308	100%
Preschool (0 to 4)	1,997	7.5%	19,650,192	6.0%
School Age (5 to 17)	5,104	19.3%	53,646,546	16.4%
College Age (18 to 24)	1,943	7.3%	30,435,736	9.3%
Young Adult (25 to 44)	6,135	23.2%	86,831,842	26.6%
Adult (45 to 64)	6,433	24.3%	83,642,175	25.6%
Older Adult (65 plus)	4,874	18.4%	52,362,817	16.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, latest 5-Year Estimates

Population by Race and Hispanic Origin, 2020	Value	Pct. of Total	U.S.	Pct. of Total
Total	26,486	100%	326,569,308	100%
American Ind. or Alaskan Native Alone	7,400	27.9%	2,688,614	0.8%
Asian Alone	173	0.7%	18,421,637	5.6%
Black Alone	58	0.2%	41,227,384	12.6%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pac. Isl. Alone	10	0.0%	611,404	0.2%
White Alone	17,760	67.1%	229,960,813	70.4%
Two or More Race Groups	1,053	4.0%	16,875,542	5.2%
Hispanic or Latino				
Total Hispanic or Latino	691	2.6%	59,361,020	18.2%
Mexican	547	2.1%	36,537,028	11.2%
Cuban	1	0.0%	2,332,584	0.7%
Puerto Rican	80	0.3%	5,699,150	1.7%
Other	63	0.2%	14,792,256	4.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, latest 5-Year Estimates

## LABOR FORCE AND UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

**Less people in the labor force and lower unemployment rate.** There are an estimated 12,743 people in the district's labor force, as of 2020, which accounts for a 9% decrease compared to the 2016 labor force, as noted in the 2017 CEDS.

Unemployment rates, according to the annual average in 2021, is lowest in McCone and Daniels Counties and highest in Roosevelt County. The district's combined unemployment rate is 3.4%, lower than the 2016 unemployment rate of 3.8%.

	Labor Force	# Employed	# Unemployed	Unemployment Rate %
Daniels, 2016	948	923	25	2.6%
Daniels, 2021	875	958		1.9%
Garfield, 2016	776	754	22	2.8%
Garfield, 2021	742	723		2.6%
McCone, 2016	1,047	1,026	21	2.0%
McCone, 2021	968	951		1.8%
Roosevelt, 2016	4,732	4,479	253	5.3%
Roosevelt, 2021	4,330	4,148		4.2%
Sheridan, 2016	1,988	1,923	65	3.3%
Sheridan, 2021	1,784	1,725		3.3%
Valley, 2016	4,454	4,302	152	3.4%
Valley, 2021	4,044	3,919		3.1%
District, 2016	13,945	13,407	538	3.8%
District, 2021	12,743	12,324	419	3.4%

## EARNINGS PER JOB AND PER CAPITA INCOME

**Per capita income has been increasing over time.** In the last 50 years, average earnings per job has increased 9% (“in real terms”, as noted by Headwaters Economics), and per capita income has seen a 90% increase. Average earnings per job measures the compensation of the average job, calculated from total earnings divided by total employment. Per capita income shows the total personal income divided by total population.

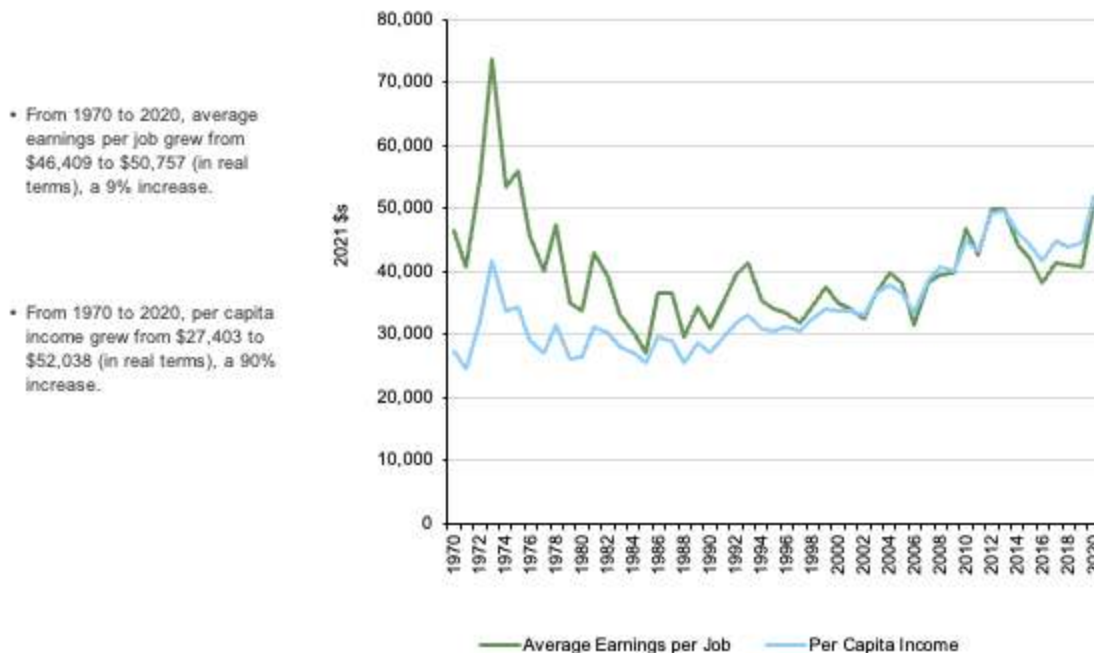
## Socioeconomic Trends

### Combined Area

### Earnings Per Job and Per Capita Income

	1970	2000	2020	Change 2000-2020
Average Earnings per Job (2021 \$s)	\$46,409	\$35,203	\$50,757	\$15,554
Per Capita Income (2021 \$s)	\$27,403	\$33,698	\$52,038	\$18,340
<b>Percent Change</b>				<b>Percent Change 2000-2020</b>
Average Earnings per Job				44.2%
Per Capita Income				54.4%

Average Earnings per Job & Per Capita Income, Combined Area

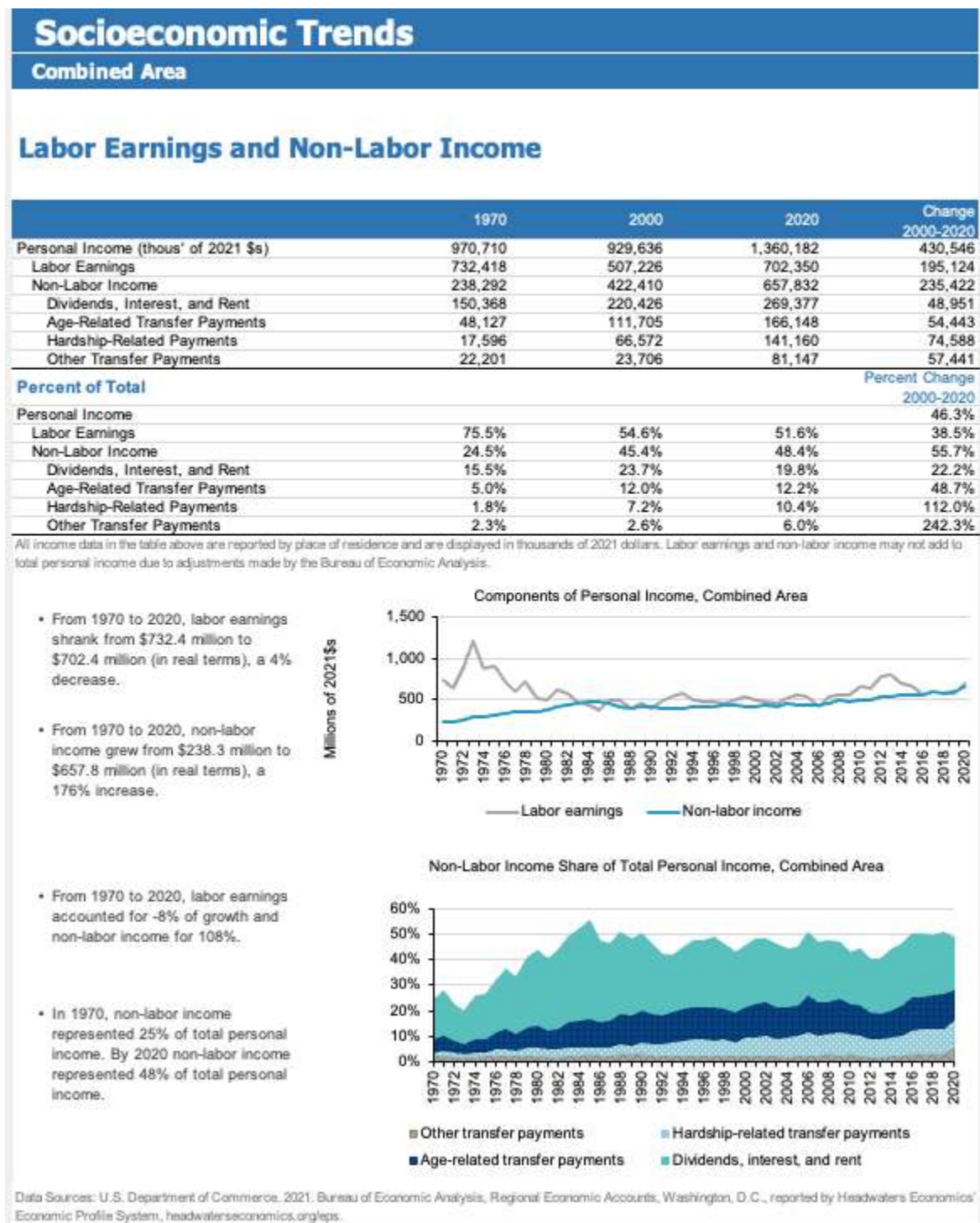


Data Sources: U.S. Department of Commerce, 2021, Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Accounts, Washington, D.C., reported by Headwaters Economics' Economic Profile System, [headwaterseconomics.org/eps](https://headwaterseconomics.org/eps).

## LABOR EARNINGS AND NON-LABOR INCOME

**Nearly 50% of personal income is from non-labor income.** The area served by GNDC has seen an increase in personal income, accounting for labor earnings and non-labor income, since 2000. However, labor earnings have been decreasing while non-labor income has been

increasing. As of 2020, non-labor income represents a total of 48% of total personal income in the district. Non-labor income includes dividends, interest, rent, and transfer payments such as government retirement, medical payments, unemployment and disability insurance benefits and other hardship-related payments.



## POVERTY RATE

**Increase in poverty rate.** As noted in the 2017 CEDS, 17.6% of the district's total population was living in poverty. As of 2020, based on U.S. Census data accessed through Headwater Economics, 18.7% of the population was living in poverty with the highest percentage of those among people under 18 years old (25.5%). Roosevelt County had the highest percentage of people below poverty (30%) with 43% of those being Native American.

## EDUCATION

**95% of residents have a high school degree or equivalent.** Based on data collected during the 2020 Census, among those 25 years and older, the majority of the population (95%) has achieved a high school degree or equivalent. 28% have some college education but no degree. Nearly 30% have either an associate degree (10%), a bachelor degree (15%) or a graduate or professional degree (5%).

## HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE

**89% are covered by health insurance.** According to the [National Economic Data Explorer](#), 88.7% of the people who live in the GNDC are covered by health insurance, as of the 2020 Census.

Health Insurance Coverage	
Age	
Under 19	6,184
19 to 64	11,095
65 and older	4,528
Sex	
Male	10,931
Female	10,876
Race and Ethnicity	
White	15,936
Black	54
American Indian and Alaska Native	4,670
Asian	161
Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander	10
Some Other Race	25
Two or More Races	951
White Alone, Not Hispanic	15,576
Hispanic or Latino	530
Total Noninstitutionalized with a Disability	3,509

## HOUSING UNITS

**Less than 10% of the housing stock has been built in the last 10+ years.** As noted by StatsAmerica, there were a total of 14,217 housing units in the area serviced by GNDC. Among those, 52% are owner-occupied; 20% are renter-occupied; and 28% are vacant for seasonal or recreational use. More than 58% of the housing stock was built before 1970, and less than 10% has been built since 2010.

Housing units, 2020	Value	Pct. of Total	U.S. Units	Pct. of Total
Total Housing Units	14,217	100%	138,432,751	100%
Owner Occupied	7,386	52.0%	78,801,376	56.9%
Renter Occupied	2,840	20.0%	43,552,843	31.5%
Vacant For Seasonal or Recreational Use	3,991	28.1%	16,078,532	11.6%
1-Unit (Attached or Detached)	8,548	60.1%	84,360,620	60.9%
2 - 9 Units	513	3.6%	14,884,609	10.8%
10 - 19 Units	122	0.9%	5,163,777	3.7%
20 or more Units	179	1.3%	11,190,803	8.1%
Built prior to 1940	2,628	18.5%	17,184,492	12.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, latest 5-Year Estimates

Age of Housing Stock	
2010 or Later	462
2000-2009	672
1970 to 2000	4,801
1950 to 1969	4,783
Before 1950	3,499
Residential Building Activity	
Permits filed - Total	9
Single-family	7
Two-family	2
Multi-family	0

## RESIDENT OCCUPATIONS

**92% increase in farming, fishing and forestry occupations since 2015.** Among those who are 16 years and older, the greatest percentage of occupations in the GNDC are management, professional and related (34%), followed by sales and office (22%), service (17%), construction, extraction and maintenance (12%), production, transportation and material moving (11%) and then farming, fishing and forestry (5%), as noted in the 2020 Census.

Interesting to note is that the number of employed civilians reported in farming, fishing and forestry occupations has increased 92% since 2015, from 264 to 507.



	2015	2015%	2020	2020%	Occupation Change
<b>Employed civilian population, 16+ years</b>	11,623		11,369		Total = -2%
Management, professional, related	4,521	38%	3,903	34%	-14%
Service	2,336	20%	1,925	17%	-18%
Sales and office	2,174	19%	2,476	22%	-14%
Construction, extraction and maintenance	1,236	11%	1,305	12%	6%
Production, transportation and material moving	1,092	9%	1,253	11%	15%
Farming, fishing and forestry	264	2%	507	5%	92%

## LARGEST INDUSTRIES

**Largest industries include public administration, educational services, retail trade, accommodation and food services, and wholesale trade.** During Q4 2021, the largest 2-digit NAICS industries by employment in GNDC's district, according to [StatsAmerica's Big Radius Tool](#), were public administration, educational services, retail trade, accommodation and food services, and wholesale trade.

Largest 2-digit NAICS Industries by Employment in Qtr 4 2021

2-Digit NAICS	Employment	% of Total	Annualized Earnings per Job	Relative to Total
00 Total	9,090	100.0%	\$45,037	100.0%
92 Public Administration	1,328	14.6%	\$51,007	113.3%
81 Educational Services	1,188	13.0%	\$41,202	91.5%
44-45 Retail Trade	850	9.4%	\$33,443	74.3%
72 Accommodation and Food Services	791	8.7%	\$16,941	37.6%
42 Wholesale Trade	402	4.4%	\$62,331	138.4%
81 Other Services (Except Public Administration)	237	2.6%	\$24,967	55.4%
52 Finance and Insurance	223	2.5%	\$57,132	126.9%
23 Construction	193	2.1%	\$49,385	109.7%
48-49 Transportation & Warehousing	183	2.0%	\$57,554	127.8%
54 Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	175	1.9%	\$74,118	164.6%

## EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

**Top industry sectors with the most jobs: government, retail trade, and accommodation and food services. Most new jobs: real estate, wholesale trade, and finance and insurance.** As of the 2020 Census, noted by Headwaters Economics, the top three industry



sectors with the highest number of jobs within the GNDC district were government (3,350), retail trade (1,319) and accommodation and food services (904). The industry sectors that added the most new jobs since 2001 were related to real estate (184), wholesale trade (67) and finance and insurance (64).

Between 2001 and 2020, there was a 3% increase in services-related industry jobs; but a 7% decrease in government jobs and a 14% decrease in non-services related industry jobs.

## EARNINGS BY INDUSTRY

**Highest labor earnings industry sectors: government, retail trade, transportation and warehousing. Most new earnings: farm, wholesale trade and retail trade.** The three industry sectors with the highest labor earnings in the district, according to the 2020 Census, were government, retail trade and transportation and warehousing, as noted by Headwaters Economics. The industry sectors that added the most earnings since 2001 were farm, wholesale trade and retail trade.

# Socioeconomic Trends

## Combined Area

### Earnings by Industry (since 2000)

Labor earnings in thousands of 2021 \$s

	2001	2010	2020	Change 2010-2020
<b>Labor Earnings</b>	<b>\$538,457</b>	<b>\$730,115</b>	<b>\$778,163</b>	<b>\$48,048</b>
Non-services related	\$134,371	\$226,450	\$193,928	-\$32,522
Farm	\$97,860	\$175,279	\$147,936	-\$27,343
Forestry, fishing, & ag. services	\$1,416	\$1,180	\$1,084	-\$96
Mining (including fossil fuels)	\$7,537	\$6,398	\$9,417	\$3,019
Construction	\$19,188	\$38,099	\$30,644	-\$7,455
Manufacturing	\$8,370	\$5,494	\$4,849	-\$645
Services related	\$206,902	\$241,906	\$287,793	\$45,887
Utilities	\$5,884	\$6,590	\$7,800	\$1,210
Wholesale trade	\$21,884	\$26,395	\$37,339	\$10,944
Retail trade	\$39,024	\$42,755	\$50,598	\$7,843
Transportation and warehousing	\$43,162	\$38,309	\$45,584	\$7,275
Information	\$13,237	\$16,904	\$13,997	-\$2,907
Finance and insurance	\$13,978	\$20,009	\$21,772	\$1,763
Real estate and rental and leasing	\$337	\$4,379	\$5,889	\$1,510
Professional and technical services	\$8,489	\$10,927	\$18,837	\$7,910
Management of companies	\$8	\$67	\$767	\$700
Administrative and waste services	\$3,105	\$8,450	\$11,186	\$2,736
Educational services	\$207	\$512	\$932	\$420
Health care and social assistance	\$21,449	\$28,841	\$31,968	\$3,127
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	\$1,511	\$3,580	\$2,562	-\$1,018
Accommodation and food services	\$15,192	\$14,574	\$17,972	\$3,398
Other services, except public admin.	\$19,436	\$19,613	\$20,588	\$975
<b>Government</b>	<b>\$170,163</b>	<b>\$200,154</b>	<b>\$216,465</b>	<b>\$16,311</b>

All earnings data are reported by place of work. Estimates for data that were not disclosed are indicated with tildes (~).

\* Total is considered to be the sum of all reported or estimated income with positive values from the earnings by industry table.

- From 2001 to 2020, earnings in non-services related industries grew from \$134.4 million to \$193.9 million, a 44% increase.
- From 2001 to 2020, earnings in services related industries grew from \$206.9 million to \$287.8 million, a 39% increase.
- From 2001 to 2020, earnings in government grew from \$170.2 million to \$216.5 million, a 27% increase.

Data Sources: U.S. Department of Commerce, 2021, Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Accounts, Washington, D.C., reported by Headwaters Economics' Economic Profile System, [headwaterseconomics.org/eps](https://headwaterseconomics.org/eps).

Find more reports like this at [headwaterseconomics.org/eps](https://headwaterseconomics.org/eps)

Data and Graphics | Part 8

## INDUSTRY AND OCCUPATION CLUSTERS

**Government, local education and training, local health services and local hospitality establishments are top industry clusters.** Data from [StatsAmerica's The Regionizer](#) is similar to what was noted by Headwaters Economics. The industry clusters that employ the most people are: government (1,768); local education and training (1,434); local health services (946); and local hospitality establishments (675).

Occupation clusters in the region include: primary, secondary and vocational education, remediation and social services (802); food preparation and service (727); attendants and general services (609); managers and first-line supervisors (450); and sales, agents, brokers and customer relations, support (432).

As noted by StatsAmerica, the highest average wages in the region are earned by those employed by the following industries: local utilities (\$104,774); financial services (\$84,781); communications equipment and services (\$84,211); and business services (\$83,645).

[StatsAmerica's The Regionizer](#) also provides a location quotient (LQ) noting which industries have a higher concentration of employment in the region compared to the rest of the United States. The industries with the highest LQs in the region include: non-metal mining (4.56); livestock farming (2.74); government (1.9); food processing and manufacturing (1.61); oil and gas production and transportation (1.52); crop farming (1.22); and local utilities (1.1).

## PROPRIETORS

**Less proprietors in 2020 vs. 2010, but an increase in total proprietor income.** As of the 2020 Census, there was a 11% decrease in the number of proprietors in GNDC since 2000, including sole proprietorships and those who are self-employed in the non-farm and farm industry sectors. In 2000, there were 5,889 proprietors; in 2020, there was a total of 5,249.

However, proprietors' income, accounting for non-farm and farm self-employment, increased 20% since 2000.

## ECONOMIC DISTRESS CRITERIA

**Improved economic distress criteria compared to 2017 CEDS calculations.** Looking at key economic distress criteria as identified by StatsAmerica, the area served by the GNDC has lower unemployment rates but also lower per capita personal income (PCPI) and lower per capita money income (PCMI) levels than the rest of the United States. The lowest income levels can be found in Roosevelt County and the highest are in Sheridan County, above the national levels.

However, compared to the economic distress criteria calculations included in the 2017 CEDS, and not accounting for inflation, etc., the 2020 calculations show improvements in PCPI and PCMI levels in every county—except in McCone County where its PCPI levels show a decrease from the 2017 CEDS calculations.

	24-Month Unemployment Rate	Plus/Minus U.S.	BEA PCPI	% of U.S.	ACS 5-Year PCMI	% of U.S.
Daniels, 2017	2.47	-2.35	\$43,357	90.1	\$33,140	114.6
Daniels, 2020	2.02	-3.83	\$64,205	107.9	\$33,614	95
Garfield, 2017	2.82	-2	\$42,703	88.8	\$26,142	90.4
Garfield, 2020	2.49	-3.36	\$44,812	75.3	\$29,149	82.4
McCone, 2017	1.97	-2.85	\$54,654	113.6	\$28,654	99
McCone, 2020	2.1	-3.75	\$48,924	82.2	\$31,242	88.3
Roosevelt, 2017	5.12	0.3	\$35,358	73.5	\$16,182	55.9
Roosevelt, 2020	4.54	-1.31	\$41,531	69.8	\$18,669	52.8
Sheridan, 2017	2.96	-1.86	\$51,250	106.5	\$30,814	106.5
Sheridan, 2020	3.48	-2.37	\$61,236	102.9	\$37,958	107.3
Valley, 2017	3.27	-1.55	\$42,622	88.6	\$26,337	91
Valley, 2020	3.22	-2.63	\$54,556	91.7	\$28,440	80.4
District, 2020	3.49	-2.36	\$49,702	83.5	\$26,120	73.8

#### Economic Distress Criteria

24-month Avg. BLS Unemployment Rate ending May 2022

2020 Per Capita Personal Income (BEA PCPI)

2020 Per Capita Money Income (ACS 5-year PCMI)

	24 Month Unemployment	Threshold Calculation	BEA PCPI	Threshold Calculation	ACS 5-Year PCMI	Threshold Calculation
Selected Region	3.49	-2.36	\$49,702	83.5	\$26,120	73.8
U.S.	5.85	0.00	\$59,510	100.0	\$35,384	100.0
Daniels County, MT	2.02	-3.83	\$64,205	107.9	\$33,614	95.0
Garfield County, MT	2.49	-3.36	\$44,812	75.3	\$29,149	82.4
McCone County, MT	2.10	-3.75	\$48,924	82.2	\$31,242	88.3
Roosevelt County, MT	4.54	-1.31	\$41,531	69.8	\$18,669	52.8
Sheridan County, MT	3.48	-2.37	\$61,236	102.9	\$37,958	107.3
Valley County, MT	3.22	-2.63	\$54,556	91.7	\$28,440	80.4

**Note:** The threshold calculation for unemployment reflects the percentage point difference between the unemployment rate for the selected area and the U.S. figure. For example, if a region has a 24-month rate of 6.9 and the U.S. rate is 7.9, the difference shown in the threshold column is -1.0—meaning it is 1 percentage point lower than the national rate. The threshold calculation for income is the selected area's per capita value divided by U.S. per capita income and shown as a percentage share of the U.S. figure. For example, if the selected area has a threshold calculation of 145.2, this means its per capita income is 45.2 percent higher than the nation at large.

**Source:** StatsAmerica, using U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (unemployment), U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (PCPI) and U.S. Census Bureau (ACS 5-year PCMI) data.

## FUNDING SOURCES

**Multiple public and private funding sources exist, with caveats.** There are multiple public funding sources available for viable projects including:

- Montana State Indian Equity Fund & Native American Collateral Support
- Montana Board of Investments
- Community Development Block Grant Revolving Loan Fund
- Community Development Financial Institutions
- EPA Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund
- USDA Intermediary Relending Program
- Montana Department of Commerce MicroBusiness Finance Program
- USDA Rural Microbusiness Assistance Program
- Certified Regional Development Corporation
- US Economic Development Administration
- EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant
- MT Dept. of Commerce SBA Small Business Development Center
- MT Dept. of Ag. - Food and Ag Development Center
- NeighborWorks Montana
- USDA Value Added Producer Grant
- Montana Growth Through Agriculture fund

However, many funding sources have restrictions and specific parameters that don't always fit the needs of the area.

The challenge may be less about private lenders not having a shortage of available capital and more about start ups and other borrowers not having adequate equity to access funding to start and grow their businesses.

Below is a list of offices and deposits of all FDIC-Insured Institutions by county.

County	No. of Offices	Deposits (\$000)	Market Share
Daniels	1	134,221	0.39%
Garfield	1	68,923	0.20%
McCone	1	18,812	0.05%
Roosevelt	5	340,336	0.99%
Sheridan	3	257,132	0.75%
Valley	5	318,366	0.93%

Source: <https://www7.fdic.gov/sod/sodMarketRpt.asp?barItem=2&sZipCode=&InfoAsOf=2021&SortBy=Name&reRun=Y>



## GREAT NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (CEDS) AND ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND RESILIENCY ADDENDUM (ERRA)

### SWOT ANALYSIS: KEY TAKEAWAYS

*What are our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats and how do they serve as guideposts for charting a path for our future?*

Although it would be easy to point out the weaknesses and threats of the area served by the Great Northern Development Corporation (GNDC), there are also tremendous strengths and opportunities to increase stability and resilience throughout the region.

Key strengths of the area that reinforce the opportunity for economic stability include:

- The people and the close-knit communities
- A history of coming together and supporting one another
- The small-town lifestyle in which small businesses and entrepreneurs can thrive

Key opportunities to increase the area's resiliency include:

- Collaboration with the Fort Peck Assiniboine & Sioux Tribe economic development office to implement common CEDS strategies and goals
- Continued collaboration and partnership with Fort Peck Community College to develop a workforce that can fill the jobs needed to further develop the local economy
- Focused emphasis on supporting new and expanding small businesses and entrepreneurs to serve the needs of the local communities
- Secure funding for extended cleanup and remodeling of rundown buildings and updating of infrastructure

### SWOT ANALYSIS: BASED ON ECONOMIC CONDITIONS AND COMMUNITY INPUT

GNDC heard from more than 400 community members from across the district. Specifics about how input was gathered can be found in the [Appendix: Community Input Process](#). In addition, GNDC reviewed the community needs assessment survey conducted in Daniels County in January 2022, with more than 100 people responding. Survey results (representing nearly 20% of the area's total population) can be found in the [Appendix: Community Input: GNDC: Survey Analysis](#) and Appendix: [Community Input: Daniels: Survey Analysis](#).

Below is the SWOT analysis of the region, based on a review of the economic conditions of the area, the community input received, and with a focus on economic resiliency.

<b>STRENGTHS</b> <i>What are attributes of the area that are helpful?</i>	<b>WEAKNESSES</b> <i>What are attributes of the area that are not helpful?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The people</li> <li>• Close-knit communities</li> <li>• Small town lifestyles</li> <li>• Low crime (some counties)</li> <li>• Open spaces</li> <li>• Recreational opportunities</li> <li>• Entrepreneurial spirit</li> <li>• Low unemployment rate</li> <li>• Quiet</li> <li>• Low cost of living (relative)</li> <li>• Knowledge and education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workforce/lack of employees</li> <li>• Housing</li> <li>• Childcare</li> <li>• Lack of shopping/grocery/services/restaurants, etc.</li> <li>• Aging infrastructure</li> <li>• Poverty</li> <li>• Work opportunities</li> <li>• Appearances</li> <li>• Remote location/distances to cities</li> </ul>
<b>OPPORTUNITIES</b> <i>What is/could be happening that may be helpful?</i>	<b>THREATS</b> <i>What is/could be happening that may not be helpful?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Entrepreneur/small business support</li> <li>• Commitment to economic development</li> <li>• Fort Peck Community College</li> <li>• Healthcare services (some counties)</li> <li>• Agriculture and industry diversification</li> <li>• Desire for thriving communities</li> <li>• Interest in attracting/retaining new generations</li> <li>• Possibility to increase tourism</li> <li>• Transportation</li> <li>• Workforce development</li> <li>• Opportunity Zone designation (Fort Peck Indian Reservation)</li> <li>• Capitalize on new legislation, policies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited funding sources</li> <li>• Healthcare access</li> <li>• Substance abuse</li> <li>• Inflation, increase in prices</li> <li>• Legislation, regulations, policies</li> <li>• Lack of resilience to downturns</li> <li>• Supply chain challenges</li> <li>• Possibility of attracting too many people</li> <li>• Existing families having less children</li> <li>• Lack of updated growth plans (some areas)</li> <li>• Limited resources - including human capacity - to implement plans and changes</li> </ul>

## RANKINGS: BASED ON THE INNOVATION INTELLIGENCE INDEX

To gain a better understanding of where GNDC quantitatively stands as an Economic Development District, an in-depth review of the Innovation Intelligence Index was conducted. According to [StatsAmerica](#), "The Innovation Intelligence Index helps explore regional characteristics related to innovation and entrepreneurship to help advance economic development strategies."



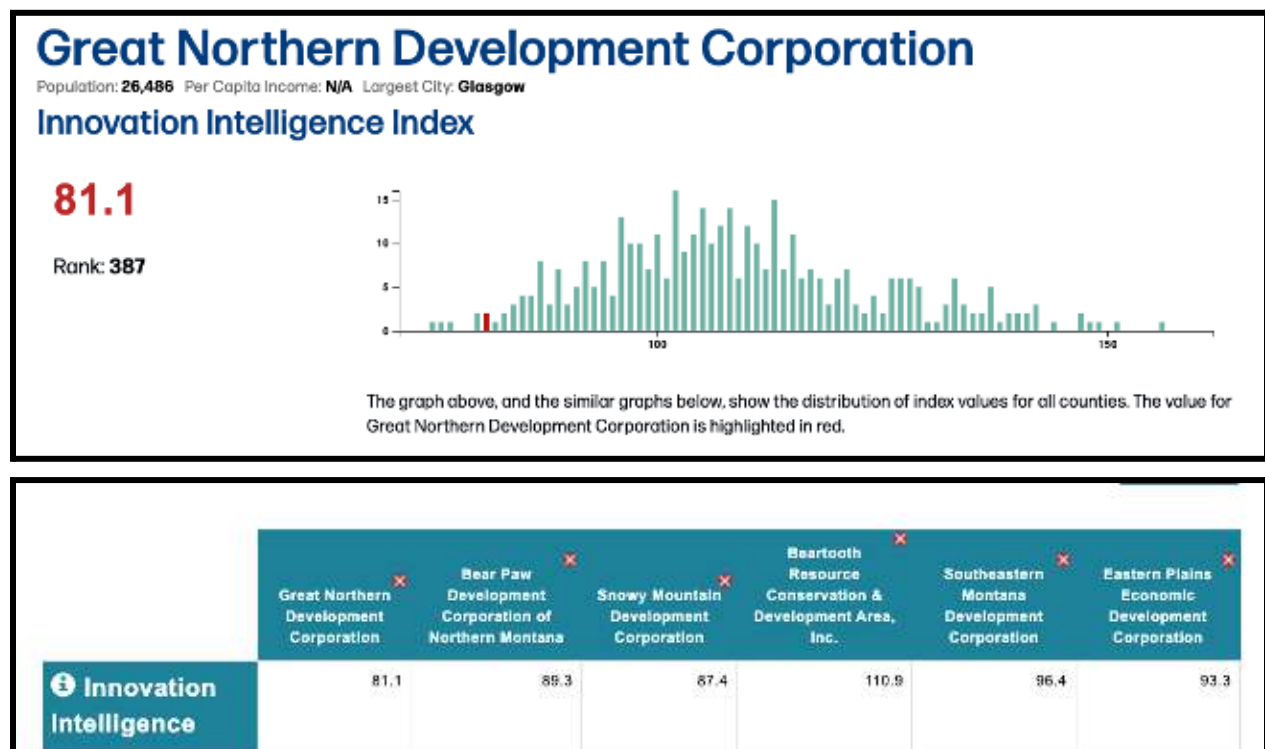
As noted by Stats America, the data from the Innovation Intelligence Index can be used to:

- “See and understand a region’s weaknesses, strengths and potential.”
- “Inform stakeholders’ collective action toward a common vision.”
- “Guide complex decision-making at a regional-level.”

To measure innovation capacity and innovation outcomes, the overall index uses three input indexes (Human Capital & Knowledge Creation; Business Dynamics; and Business Profile) and two output indexes (Employment and Productivity; and Economic Well-Being).

Further definitions of each of these indexes, as well as their sub-indexes and measurements, have been included in the [Appendix: Innovation Intelligence Index](#).

As measured by the [Innovation Intelligence Index](#), the GNDC area currently has “low relative Innovation Capacity,” indexing at 81.1 with an overall rank of 387 among a total of 393 Economic Development Districts. It has the lowest Innovation Intelligence rating among the five other Eastern Montana Economic Development Districts: Bear Paw; Snowy Mountain; Beartooth Resource; Southeastern Montana; and Eastern Plains. However, the vision, goals, and strategic direction of this CEDS plan have been designed to address and increase the Innovation Intelligence Index ranking of the GNDC region.



Below is a summary of this region's rankings, based on what's been included in the Innovation Intelligence Index and in comparison to other Economic Development Districts.

HIGHEST RANKINGS OF INPUTS (Top 3)	LOWEST RANKINGS OF INPUTS (Bottom 3)
<p>Human Capital &amp; Knowledge Creation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some college attainment (#1)</li> <li>• Knowledge creation &amp; technology diffusion</li> <li>• STEM education and occupations</li> </ul> <p>Business Dynamics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jobs attributed to establishment births to total employment ratio</li> <li>• Overall establishment dynamics</li> <li>• Establishment births to deaths ratio</li> </ul> <p>Business Profile</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No ranking higher than 4 out of 6</li> </ul>	<p>Human Capital &amp; Knowledge Creation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall educational attainment</li> <li>• Avg prime working-age population growth</li> </ul> <p>Business Dynamics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traded sector establishment births to all establishment ratio</li> <li>• Overall establishment formation</li> <li>• Change in establishment births to all establishment ratio</li> <li>• Establishment expansions to contractions ratio</li> <li>• Avg high-tech, early-in-life-cycle establishment ratio</li> </ul> <p>Business Profile</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall proprietorship</li> <li>• Farm operators with internet access</li> <li>• Proprietorship rate</li> <li>• Change in proprietorship rate</li> <li>• Proprietor income to total wages and salaries ratio</li> </ul>
HIGHEST RANKINGS OF OUTPUTS (Top 3)	LOWEST RANKINGS OF OUTPUTS (Bottom 3)
<p>Employment &amp; Productivity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall patents</li> <li>• Change in average patenting rate</li> <li>• Patent diversity</li> </ul> <p>Economic Well-Being</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Average unemployment rate</li> <li>• Average net migration</li> </ul>	<p>Employment &amp; Productivity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall industry performance</li> <li>• Industry diversity</li> <li>• Industry cluster strength</li> <li>• Overall GDP</li> <li>• Overall job growth to population growth ratio</li> <li>• Change in share of high-tech industry employment</li> </ul> <p>Economic Well-Being</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall residential internet connectivity</li> <li>• Broadband infrastructure and adoption</li> <li>• Broadband adoption barriers</li> <li>• Overall compensation</li> <li>• Per capita personal income growth</li> <li>• Average poverty rate</li> </ul>



## GREAT NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (CEDs) AND ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND RESILIENCY ADDENDUM (ERRA)

### VISION-GOALS-OBJECTIVES

*What's our vision? What are our priorities, goals and objectives, based on community input?*

The vision of Great Northern Development Corporation (GNDC) is to sustain and grow healthy and thriving communities by promoting and providing professional services and resources that empower community members to reach their economic goals and improve their lives.

### PRIORITIES

Based on community input, matched with limited resources, GNDC will focus on the following:

- Collaborating with counties, communities, businesses, organizations, private and public entities and other organizations in the region to make the most of existing resources
- Working with entrepreneurs and small businesses
- Building on the area's strengths including agriculture
- Supporting initiatives that focus on retaining and/or attracting people who have existing connections to the area

These focal points will also help to create stability, one of the most important things identified in the region that is needed to become more resilient.

### GOALS

The GNDC has three goals, based on community input, the SWOT analysis and its priorities:

- Goal 1: Support Small Businesses and Entrepreneurs in Northeastern Montana
- Goal 2: Encourage and Promote Economic Growth and Stability
- Goal 3: Positively Impact Area Residents' Quality of Life Including Access to Housing

### GOALS & OBJECTIVES & INITIATIVES

#### **GOAL 1: Support Small Businesses and Entrepreneurs in Northeastern Montana**

*Objective 1a: Increase GNDC's Business Dynamics ranking of 88.5*

*Objective 1b: Increase GNDC's Business Profile ranking of 57.1*

GNDC's Small Business and Entrepreneurs Programs and Initiatives

- Native American Business Advisor Program
- Small Business Development Center
- Food & Ag Development Center

**GOAL 2: Encourage and Promote Economic Growth and Stability**

*Objective 2a: Increase GNDC's Employment & Productivity ranking of 79.7*

GNDC's Economic Growth and Stability Programs and Initiatives

- Small Business Development Center
- Native American Business Advisor Program
- Food & Ag Development Center
- Community Development
- Brownfields Programs

**GOAL 3: Positively Impact Area Residents' Quality of Life Including Access to Housing**

*Objective 3a: Increase GNDC's Economic Well-Being ranking of 96.7*

GNDC's Quality of Life and Access to Housing Programs and Initiatives

- Small Business Development Center
- Native American Business Advisor Program
- Housing Assistance
- Homebuyer Education
- Housing Projects



## GREAT NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (CEDs) AND ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND RESILIENCY ADDENDUM (ERRA)

### STRATEGIC DIRECTION and ACTION PLAN

*How are we going to achieve our goals and objectives? What are our strategies for moving forward? What programs and initiatives are in place? Which action items need to be accomplished?*

Great Northern Development Corporation (GNDC)'s strategic direction and action plan have been developed based on its goals and objectives and are designed to address the outcomes from the SWOT analysis and the Innovation Intelligence Index rankings.

#### **GOAL 1: Support Small Businesses and Entrepreneurs in Northeastern Montana**

- *Objective 1a: Increase GNDC's Business Dynamics ranking of 88.5*
- *Objective 1b: Increase GNDC's Business Profile ranking of 57.1*

#### GNDC's Small Business and Entrepreneurs Programs and Initiatives

- Native American Business Advisor Program
- Small Business Development Center
- Food & Ag Development Center

*Strategy 1.1: Provide business planning technical assistance to support existing and new small businesses and entrepreneurs and to help increase their resiliency*

#### Action Items:

- Continue to host the Small Business Development Center, Food & Ag Development Center and Native American Business Center to provide business development technical assistance
- Conduct an annual region-wide business survey to identify needs of current businesses in the district
- Continue to promote GNDC as an available resource and tool through proactive marketing and communications
- Provide 1:1 technical assistance to business applying to industry-specific grant programs including, but not limited to: the Indian Equity Fund Small Business Grant, the Montana Growth Through Agriculture program, USDA Value Added Agriculture Grant, the Montana Big Sky Trust Fund

*Strategy 1.2: Provide financing to those businesses that don't have the collateral by creating and sustaining loan programs that meet capital needs of business start-ups and expansions*

Action Items:

- Develop services as a Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) to leverage public funds with private dollars to create flexible lending programs that meet the needs of the region
- Educate communities about investing mechanisms that can improve rural economies, such as rural investing cooperatives and crowdfunding

*Strategy 1.3: Collaborate with local, Tribal, State, and Federal entities to provide workforce training and apprenticeship opportunities to help increase stability for local business owners*

Action Items:

- Seek out partners and collaborators to assess the workforce needs of the region, focusing on opportunities for assisting employers with workforce development opportunities
- Participate in the Workforce Development for Trades & Industries Coalition of resource providers at the State and Local levels to support developments that would enable the Fort Peck Assiniboine & Sioux Tribes to grow businesses in the trades
- Host Montana Department of Labor & Industry workshops and training for industry leaders in the region on how to develop and utilize state apprenticeship and training programs
- Promote resources such as the Incumbent Worker Training program to employers
- Collaborate with the Montana Job Service to promote workforce training opportunities such as the MSU Extension Remote Worker certification program
- Collaborate with Fort Peck Community College to identify opportunities for workforce development through apprenticeships and training opportunities

*Strategy 1.4: Help business owners with strategies to become more resilient during times of economic downturn*

Action Items:

- Work with businesses to help with succession planning in order to retain existing businesses and services
- Host educational opportunities for businesses to learn about accessing economic relief programs
- Connect business owners with cybersecurity resources and tools
- Help businesses and entrepreneurs in creating stability and resiliency by providing classes on business planning, finances and marketing

*Strategy 1.5: Assist businesses to become more competitive in existing and expanded markets and increase their overall resiliency*

Action Items:

- Process applications from new or expanding business to county or local tax reduction, Tax Increment Financing, or New Market Tax Credits programs
- Work with businesses to qualify for participation in Made/Grown in Montana/Native Made in Montana marketing opportunities including the Montana culinary tourism program “Taste Our Place”
- Assist businesses by providing low cost training opportunities on marketing and in applying for grants and other funding opportunities to create and grow marketing strategies
- Work with local distributors, franchises, and business chains to offer locally grown/created/produced products in their stores
- Support land use planning that considers industrial sites to start new and expand business lines, providing technical assistance to businesses

*Strategy 1.6: Collaborate with the Fort Peck Assiniboine & Sioux Tribes economic development office to implement common CEDS strategies and goals and support regional stability*

Action Items:

- Increase the number of Indianpreneurs participating in the Native American Made in Montana program by promoting the program to Indianpreneurs
- Sit on the Board of Directors for the Assiniboine & Sioux Minerals Development LLC Reservation
- Work with the Board of Ft Peck Incorporated and their Tribal Convenience Store to build new or renovate/expand current Convenience Store
- Partner with the Fort Peck Economic Development Office to asses financing needs of the Fort Peck Assiniboine & Sioux entrepreneurs
- Develop and advocate for financial products that meet the capitalization and collateral needs of the Fort Peck Assiniboine & Sioux Native American entrepreneurs

*Strategy 1.7: Build GNDC staff capacity to better understand needs of business owners and entrepreneurs*

Action Items:

- Encourage staff professional development and participation in continuing education opportunities around economic development topics
- Provide training opportunities to the GNDC board of directors on business development strategies for rural communities

## **GOAL 2: Encourage and Promote Economic Growth and Stability**

- *Objective 2a: Increase GNDC's Employment & Productivity ranking of 79.7*

### GNDC's Economic Growth and Stability Programs and Initiatives

- Small Business Development Center
- Native American Business Advisor Program
- Food & Ag Development Center
- Community Development
- Brownfields Programs

*Strategy 2.1: Provide guidance to new and expanding small businesses and entrepreneurs to serve the needs of the local communities and retain and attract residents who have existing connections to the area*

- Collaborate with the Fort Peck Assiniboine & Sioux Tribes Office of Economic Development on business attraction and development of new business opportunities
- Work with Child Care Connections of Montana to help establish new licensed child care providers and increase capacity
- Support hospitality and tourism-related businesses within Missouri River Country tourism region and the Fort Peck Reservation to further develop and promote their services and offerings

*Strategy 2.2: Encourage diversification of local economies through value-added agriculture opportunities that increase the number of value-added agriculture operations in the region*

#### **Action Items:**

- Identify local, regional, and state experts to deliver training opportunities for value-added agriculture
- Hold training opportunities throughout the region to educate community members and agricultural producers on the economic impact of value-added agriculture
- Provide technical assistance for business development of value-added agriculture (i.e., business plan development and marketing assistance) to area farmers, ranchers, and agribusinesses
- Hold business plan training opportunities for agriculture producers and agribusinesses throughout the region
- Expand the current mentoring network for new participants exploring and developing their value-added product; mentoring relationships will provide participants with technical support, guide product development, and opportunity to share best practices
- Provide ag business assistance and help value-added agriculture businesses obtain funding (public or private, loan or grant)
- Support agriculture businesses in navigating opportunities and challenges related to agri-tourism options



*Strategy 2.3: Assist area leaders and policy council members as they develop and update planning documents (growth policies, housing plans, capital improvement plans, etc.) to increase their economic resiliency*

Action Items:

- Maintain a database of growth policies, capital improvements plans and disaster emergency plans in the district
- Assist communities with updating planning documents in a timely and consistent manner
- Facilitate education opportunities for communities to learn how to utilize planning documents to leverage funding, plan for large improvements, and become more resilient to future economic or natural disasters
- Hire a regional community development specialist to collaborate with area engineering firms and community leaders to assist with applying for loans and grants to support the cost of planning efforts and address infrastructure needs including consistent broadband access
- Assist communities with the development of plans, and funding opportunities, for rehabilitation of blighted properties—commercial and residential—to encourage new growth

*Strategy 2.4: Development of Brownfields areas or locations that have the potential for reuse through collaboration with Montana DEQ and US EPA Brownfields*

Action Items:

- Act as the lead entity for the Eastern Montana Brownfields Coalition, to assist communities in identifying contaminated areas with potential redevelopment
- Maintain a database of properties (public and private) that have potential for redevelopment
- Market the EPA Brownfields programs to the EDD's within the Eastern Montana Brownfields Coalition
- Maintain the Brownfields revolving loan cleanup fund to maintain a resource for redevelopment of contaminated properties

*Strategy 2.5: Support efforts to develop and offer expanded energy resources available in the region to increase stability*

Action Items:

- Encourage thoughtful natural resource practices through information sharing and workshops on topics such as (but not limited to) carbon sequestration, regenerative agriculture, sustainable growth, solar and wind power, etc.
- Partner with the Montana DEQ to implement a system of EV-charging stations along U.S. Highway 2, offering potential to diversify the existing businesses and encourage additional tourism activities

### **GOAL 3: Positively Impact Area Residents' Quality of Life Including Access to Housing**

- *Objective 3a: Increase GNDC's Economic Well-Being ranking of 96.7*

#### GNDC's Quality of Life and Access to Housing Programs and Initiatives

- Small Business Development Center
- Native American Business Advisor Program
- Housing Assistance
- Homebuyer Education
- Housing Projects

*Strategy 3.1: Assist cities, counties and organizations working to provide safe and healthy housing options to retain and attract residents who have existing connections to the area*

##### **Action Items:**

- Offer educational opportunities for communities to learn about strategies for redevelopment of blighted properties and funding mechanisms for development of safe and healthy housing
- Assist cities and counties with applications to funding sources for housing rehab or development projects
- Complete a region-wide housing study to identify areas of need and opportunities to develop housing in the region
- Implement the USDA Housing Preservation program to assist low and very-low income homeowners with health and safety rehabilitation
- Implement a supportive housing learning collaborative that engages stakeholders across a six-county region of Northeastern Montana and the Fort Peck Reservation; conduct a study of the housing services in the region to determine areas where healthcare services are/can be working with housing services to assist the most vulnerable populations of the region; create a registry of tenancy support services and care management providers that serve the housing insecure and homeless population and an action plan to increase housing access and coordinate service providers with clients engaged in housing programs; engage city councils, county commissions, and chambers of commerce in the region to identify key partners; contract with the Corporation for Supportive Housing to facilitate stakeholder engagement, community education, and the development of best practices to share with the community

*Strategy 3.2: Support the development and expansion efforts of communities to provide quality healthcare services to the region's residents*

##### **Action Items:**

- Assist cities and counties to complete planning efforts for rehabilitation or development of hospitals, nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and senior centers
- Work with cities and counties to secure funding for rehabilitation, expansion or construction of hospitals, nursing homes, assisting living facilities and senior centers

*Strategy 3.3: Facilitate personal wealth growth through education and counseling services to help decrease poverty levels*

Action Items:

- Offer Homebuyer Education counseling and classes through a partnership with NeighborWorks Montana
- Hold financial education workshops in partnership with realtors, mortgage lenders, banks, credit unions, and the Fort Peck Housing Authority Resident Opportunities and Self-Sufficiency program

*Strategy 3.4: Promote a sustainable and equitable food system within the region by strengthening local and regional value-added ag industry infrastructure and addressing residents' interests in purchasing more food locally*

- Work to better educate local grocery stores on the importance of “locally grown food” and the benefits to the local economy of supporting value-added products; provide them with opportunities to add locally grown products to their stores
- Work with value-added producers in the region to make their products available to local consumers
- Implement a marketing and networking campaign that will result in more schools sourcing beef products from local producers
- Encourage the development of distribution networks and cooperatives to increase local access of products and reduce costs to business owners

*Strategy 3.5: Encourage the development of partnerships and coalitions to address the economic needs of the region, avoid duplication of services, and improve access to information or resources for residents of the region*

Action Items:

- Encourage communities to participate in the Montana State University Extension, “ReImagining Rural” course to better understand economic opportunities and develop strategies for community-led economic development efforts
- Facilitate education opportunities for communities to learn about community development planning tools, methods, and project development
- Partner with the Montana Business Attraction team to teach communities about resources available to attract new businesses
- Assist communities in their efforts to plan for future disaster resiliency and recovery
- Support communities in their work to update existing infrastructure, addressing funding shortages and lack of staffing
- Work with communities to secure consistent broadband access and adoption



# GREAT NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (CEDs) AND ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND RESILIENCY ADDENDUM (ERRA)

## ACTION PLAN TABLE

*Who are our implementation partners? How are our strategies and action items measured?*

### GOAL 1: SUPPORT SMALL BUSINESSES AND ENTREPRENEURS IN NORTHEASTERN MONTANA

#### Implementation Partners

Fort Peck Assiniboine & Sioux Tribes, Office  
of Economic Development  
Fort Peck Community College  
Local Banks and Credit Unions  
Local Chambers of Commerce & Agriculture  
Local Development Organizations  
Local Job Services of Montana  
Montana Department of Agriculture  
Food & Ag Development Centers  
Montana Growth Through Agriculture  
Grants & Loans  
Montana Department of Commerce  
Big Sky Trust Fund  
Board of Investments - RLF  
Community Development Block Grant - RLF  
Certified Regional Development Centers

Export Montana  
Made In Montana/Taste Our Place/Native  
Made In Montana  
Microbusiness Finance Program  
Montana Business Attraction  
Montana Department of Labor & Industries  
Montana Department of Transportation  
DBE Small Business Resources  
Montana Economic Developers Association  
MSU-Extension  
Small Business Administration  
Opportunity Finance Network  
US Treasury - CDFI  
US Economic Development Administration  
USDA Business Programs

*Strategy 1.1: Provide business planning technical assistance to support existing and new small businesses and entrepreneurs and to help increase their resiliency*

Action Items	Measurement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to host the Small Business Development Center, Food &amp; Ag</li> </ul>	<p><i>GNDC Measurements (Quarterly)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jobs created and/or retained</li> <li>Number of coalitions</li> </ul>

<p>Development Center and Native American Business Center to provide business development technical assistance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of small businesses and entrepreneurs who participate in GNDC events</li> <li>• Number of new businesses assisted</li> <li>• Number of existing businesses assisted</li> <li>• NAICS codes for assisted businesses</li> <li>• Amount of state and federal loans and grant clients received through GNDC assistance</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct an annual region-wide business survey to identify needs of current businesses in the district</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amount of Indian Equity Fund clients received through GNDC assistance</li> <li>• Number of attendees for trainings and workshops</li> <li>• Number of clients, outreach, and collaboration hours</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to promote GNDC as an available resource and tool through proactive marketing and communications</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of networking opportunities</li> <li>• Number of professional development opportunities completed by staff</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide 1:1 technical assistance to business applying to industry-specific grant programs including, but not limited to: the Indian Equity Fund Small Business Grant, the Montana Growth Through Agriculture program, USDA Value Added Agriculture grant, the Montana Big Sky Trust Fund</li> </ul>	<p><i>Innovation Intelligence Index Measurements: Business Dynamics (Every 1-5 Years)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jobs attributed to establishment births to total employment ratio</li> <li>• Overall establishment dynamics</li> <li>• Establishment births to deaths ratio</li> <li>• Traded sector establishment births to all establishment ratio</li> <li>• Overall establishment formation</li> <li>• Change in establishment births to all establishment ratio</li> <li>• Establishment expansions to contractions ratio</li> <li>• Avg high-tech, early-in-life-cycle establishment ratio</li> </ul> <p><i>Innovation Intelligence Index Measurements: Business Profile (Every 1-5 Years)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall proprietorship</li> <li>• Farm operators with internet access</li> <li>• Proprietorship rate</li> <li>• Change in proprietorship rate</li> <li>• Proprietor income to total wages and salaries ratio</li> </ul>

*Strategy 1.2: Provide financing to those businesses that don't have the collateral by creating and sustaining loan programs that meet capital needs of business start-ups and expansions*

Action Items	Measurement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop services as a Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) to leverage public funds with private dollars to create flexible lending programs that meet the needs of the region</li> </ul>	<p><i>GNDC Measurements (Quarterly)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jobs created and/or retained</li> <li>Number of coalitions</li> <li>Number of small businesses and entrepreneurs who participate in GNDC events</li> <li>Number of new businesses assisted</li> <li>Number of existing businesses assisted</li> <li>NAICS codes for assisted businesses</li> <li>Amount of state and federal loans and grant clients received through GNDC assistance</li> <li>Amount of Indian Equity Fund clients received through GNDC assistance</li> <li>Number of attendees for trainings and workshops</li> <li>Number of clients, outreach, and collaboration hours</li> <li>Number of networking opportunities</li> <li>Number of professional development opportunities completed by staff</li> </ul> <p><i>Innovation Intelligence Index Measurements: Business Dynamics (Every 1-5 Years)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jobs attributed to establishment births to total employment ratio</li> <li>Overall establishment dynamics</li> <li>Establishment births to deaths ratio</li> <li>Traded sector establishment births to all establishment ratio</li> <li>Overall establishment formation</li> <li>Change in establishment births to all establishment ratio</li> <li>Establishment expansions to contractions ratio</li> <li>Avg high-tech, early-in-life-cycle establishment ratio</li> </ul> <p><i>Innovation Intelligence Index Measurements:</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Educate communities about investing mechanisms that can improve rural economies, such as rural investing cooperatives and crowdfunding</li> </ul>	

	<p><i>Business Profile (Every 1-5 Years)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall proprietorship</li> <li>• Farm operators with internet access</li> <li>• Proprietorship rate</li> <li>• Change in proprietorship rate</li> <li>• Proprietor income to total wages and salaries ratio</li> </ul>
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*Strategy 1.3: Collaborate with local, Tribal, State, and Federal entities to provide workforce training and apprenticeship opportunities to help increase stability for local business owners*

Action Items	Measurement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek out partners and collaborators to assess the workforce needs of the region, focusing on opportunities for assisting employers with workforce development opportunities</li> </ul>	<p><i>GNDC Measurements (Quarterly)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jobs created and/or retained</li> <li>• Number of coalitions</li> <li>• Number of small businesses and entrepreneurs who participate in GNDC events</li> <li>• Number of new businesses assisted</li> <li>• Number of existing businesses assisted</li> <li>• NAICS codes for assisted businesses</li> <li>• Amount of state and federal loans and grant clients received through GNDC assistance</li> <li>• Amount of Indian Equity Fund clients received through GNDC assistance</li> <li>• Number of attendees for trainings and workshops</li> <li>• Number of clients, outreach, and collaboration hours</li> <li>• Number of networking opportunities</li> <li>• Number of professional development opportunities completed by staff</li> </ul> <p><i>Innovation Intelligence Index Measurements: Business Dynamics (Every 1-5 Years)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jobs attributed to establishment births to total employment ratio</li> <li>• Overall establishment dynamics</li> <li>• Establishment births to deaths ratio</li> <li>• Traded sector establishment births to all</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in the Workforce Development for Trades &amp; Industries Coalition of resource providers at the State and Local levels to support developments that would enable the Fort Peck Assiniboine &amp; Sioux Tribes to grow businesses in the trades</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Host Montana Department of Labor &amp; Industry workshops and training for industry leaders in the region on how to develop and utilize state apprenticeship and training programs</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote resources such as the Incumbent Worker Training program to employers</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>establishment ratio</li> <li>Overall establishment formation</li> <li>Change in establishment births to all establishment ratio</li> <li>Establishment expansions to contractions ratio</li> <li>Avg high-tech, early-in-life-cycle establishment ratio</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborate with the Montana Job Service to promote workforce training opportunities such as the MSU Extension Remote Worker certification program</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborate with Fort Peck Community College to identify opportunities for workforce development through apprenticeships and training opportunities</li> </ul>	<p><i>Innovation Intelligence Index Measurements: Business Profile (Every 1-5 Years)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overall proprietorship</li> <li>Farm operators with internet access</li> <li>Proprietorship rate</li> <li>Change in proprietorship rate</li> <li>Proprietor income to total wages and salaries ratio</li> </ul>

*Strategy 1.4: Help business owners with strategies to become more resilient during times of economic downturn*

Action Items	Measurement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with businesses to help with succession planning in order to retain existing businesses and services</li> </ul>	<p><i>GNDC Measurements (Quarterly)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jobs created and/or retained</li> <li>Number of coalitions</li> <li>Number of small businesses and entrepreneurs who participate in GNDC events</li> <li>Number of new businesses assisted</li> <li>Number of existing businesses assisted</li> <li>NAICS codes for assisted businesses</li> <li>Amount of state and federal loans and grant clients received through GNDC assistance</li> <li>Amount of Indian Equity Fund clients received through GNDC assistance</li> <li>Number of attendees for trainings and workshops</li> <li>Number of clients, outreach, and collaboration hours</li> <li>Number of networking opportunities</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Host educational opportunities for businesses to learn about accessing economic relief programs</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Connect business owners with cybersecurity resources and tools</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Help businesses and entrepreneurs</li> </ul>	



<p>in creating stability and resiliency by providing classes on business planning, finances and marketing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of professional development opportunities completed by staff</li> </ul> <p><i>Innovation Intelligence Index Measurements: Business Dynamics (Every 1-5 Years)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jobs attributed to establishment births to total employment ratio</li> <li>• Overall establishment dynamics</li> <li>• Establishment births to deaths ratio</li> <li>• Traded sector establishment births to all establishment ratio</li> <li>• Overall establishment formation</li> <li>• Change in establishment births to all establishment ratio</li> <li>• Establishment expansions to contractions ratio</li> <li>• Avg high-tech, early-in-life-cycle establishment ratio</li> </ul> <p><i>Innovation Intelligence Index Measurements: Business Profile (Every 1-5 Years)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall proprietorship</li> <li>• Farm operators with internet access</li> <li>• Proprietorship rate</li> <li>• Change in proprietorship rate</li> <li>• Proprietor income to total wages and salaries ratio</li> </ul>
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*Strategy 1.5: Assist businesses to become more competitive in existing and expanded markets and increase their overall resiliency*

Action Items	Measurement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Process applications from new or expanding business to county or local tax reduction, Tax Increment Financing, or New Market Tax Credits programs</li> </ul>	<p><i>GNDC Measurements (Quarterly)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jobs created and/or retained</li> <li>• Number of coalitions</li> <li>• Number of small businesses and entrepreneurs who participate in GNDC events</li> <li>• Number of new businesses assisted</li> <li>• Number of existing businesses assisted</li> <li>• NAICS codes for assisted businesses</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with businesses to qualify for participation in Made/Grown in Montana/Native Made in Montana</li> </ul>	

marketing opportunities including the Montana culinary tourism program "Taste Our Place"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amount of state and federal loans and grant clients received through GNDC assistance</li> <li>• Amount of Indian Equity Fund clients received through GNDC assistance</li> <li>• Number of attendees for trainings and workshops</li> <li>• Number of clients, outreach, and collaboration hours</li> <li>• Number of networking opportunities</li> <li>• Number of professional development opportunities completed by staff</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assist businesses by providing low cost training opportunities on marketing and in applying for grants and other funding opportunities to create and grow marketing strategies</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with local distributors, franchises, and business chains to offer locally grown/created/produced products in their stores</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<p><i>Innovation Intelligence Index Measurements: Business Dynamics (Every 1-5 Years)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jobs attributed to establishment births to total employment ratio</li> <li>• Overall establishment dynamics</li> <li>• Establishment births to deaths ratio</li> <li>• Traded sector establishment births to all establishment ratio</li> <li>• Overall establishment formation</li> <li>• Change in establishment births to all establishment ratio</li> <li>• Establishment expansions to contractions ratio</li> <li>• Avg high-tech, early-in-life-cycle establishment ratio</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support land use planning that considers industrial sites to start new and expand business lines, providing technical assistance to businesses</li> </ul>	<p><i>Innovation Intelligence Index Measurements: Business Profile (Every 1-5 Years)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall proprietorship</li> <li>• Farm operators with internet access</li> <li>• Proprietorship rate</li> <li>• Change in proprietorship rate</li> <li>• Proprietor income to total wages and salaries ratio</li> </ul>

*Strategy 1.6: Collaborate with the Fort Peck Assiniboine & Sioux Tribes economic development office to implement common CEDS strategies and goals and support regional stability*

Action Items	Measurement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the number of Indianpreneuers participating in the Native American Made in Montana program by promoting the program to Indianpreneurs</li> </ul>	<p><i>GNDC Measurements (Quarterly)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jobs created and/or retained</li> <li>• Number of coalitions</li> <li>• Number of small businesses and entrepreneurs who participate in GNDC events</li> <li>• Number of new businesses assisted</li> <li>• Number of existing businesses assisted</li> <li>• NAICS codes for assisted businesses</li> <li>• Amount of state and federal loans and grant clients received through GNDC assistance</li> <li>• Amount of Indian Equity Fund clients received through GNDC assistance</li> <li>• Number of attendees for trainings and workshops</li> <li>• Number of clients, outreach, and collaboration hours</li> <li>• Number of networking opportunities</li> <li>• Number of professional development opportunities completed by staff</li> </ul> <p><i>Innovation Intelligence Index Measurements: Business Dynamics (Every 1-5 Years)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jobs attributed to establishment births to total employment ratio</li> <li>• Overall establishment dynamics</li> <li>• Establishment births to deaths ratio</li> <li>• Traded sector establishment births to all establishment ratio</li> <li>• Overall establishment formation</li> <li>• Change in establishment births to all establishment ratio</li> <li>• Establishment expansions to contractions ratio</li> <li>• Avg high-tech, early-in-life-cycle establishment ratio</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sit on the Board of Directors for the Assiniboine &amp; Sioux Minerals Development LLC Reservation</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with the Board of Ft Peck Incorporated and their Tribal Convenience Store to build new or renovate/expand current Convenience Store</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partner with the Fort Peck Economic Development Office to asses financing needs of the Fort Peck Assiniboine &amp; Sioux entrepreneurs</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and advocate for financial products that meet the capitalization and collateral needs of the Fort Peck Assiniboine &amp; Sioux Native American entrepreneurs</li> </ul>	

	<p><i>Innovation Intelligence Index Measurements: Business Profile (Every 1-5 Years)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall proprietorship</li> <li>• Farm operators with internet access</li> <li>• Proprietorship rate</li> <li>• Change in proprietorship rate</li> <li>• Proprietor income to total wages and salaries ratio</li> </ul>
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*Strategy 1.7: Build GNDC staff capacity to better understand needs of business owners and entrepreneurs*

Action Items	Measurement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage staff professional development and participation in continuing education opportunities around economic development topics</li> </ul>	<p><i>GNDC Measurements (Quarterly)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jobs created and/or retained</li> <li>• Number of coalitions</li> <li>• Number of small businesses and entrepreneurs who participate in GNDC events</li> <li>• Number of new businesses assisted</li> <li>• Number of existing businesses assisted</li> <li>• NAICS codes for assisted businesses</li> <li>• Amount of state and federal loans and grant clients received through GNDC assistance</li> <li>• Amount of Indian Equity Fund clients received through GNDC assistance</li> <li>• Number of attendees for trainings and workshops</li> <li>• Number of clients, outreach, and collaboration hours</li> <li>• Number of networking opportunities</li> <li>• Number of professional development opportunities completed by staff</li> </ul> <p><i>Innovation Intelligence Index Measurements: Business Dynamics (Every 1-5 Years)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jobs attributed to establishment births to total employment ratio</li> <li>• Overall establishment dynamics</li> <li>• Establishment births to deaths ratio</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide training opportunities to the GNDC board of directors on business development strategies for rural communities</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traded sector establishment births to all establishment ratio</li> <li>• Overall establishment formation</li> <li>• Change in establishment births to all establishment ratio</li> <li>• Establishment expansions to contractions ratio</li> <li>• Avg high-tech, early-in-life-cycle establishment ratio</li> </ul> <p><i>Innovation Intelligence Index Measurements: Business Profile (Every 1-5 Years)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall proprietorship</li> <li>• Farm operators with internet access</li> <li>• Proprietorship rate</li> <li>• Change in proprietorship rate</li> <li>• Proprietor income to total wages and salaries ratio</li> </ul>
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## GOAL 2: ENCOURAGE AND PROMOTE ECONOMIC GROWTH AND STABILITY

### Implementation Partners

GNDC region Cities, Towns and Counties  
 Fort Peck Assiniboine & Sioux Tribes, Office of Economic Development  
 Fort Peck Assiniboine & Sioux Tribes, Environmental Protection Office  
 Fort Peck Community College  
 Local Chambers of Commerce & Agriculture  
 Local Development Organizations  
 Local Job Services of Montana  
 Montana Community Foundation  
 Montana Cooperative Development Center  
 Montana Department of Commerce  
 Big Sky Trust Fund - Planning  
 Community Development Block Grant - Economic Development  
 Certified Regional Development Centers  
 Drinking Water State Revolving Fund  
 INTERCAP Loan Program  
 W2ASACT

Montana Coal Endowment Program  
 Montana Main Street Program  
 Montana Business Attraction  
 Montana Department of Environmental Quality  
 Montana Department of Natural Resources  
 Renewable Resource Grant & Loan  
 Reclamation and Development Grants  
 Montana Economic Developers Association  
 MSU-Extension  
 Montana Department of Agriculture - Food & Ag Development Centers  
 Montana Growth Through Agriculture Grants & Loans  
 Montana Manufacturing Extension Center  
 US Economic Development Administration  
 US Environmental Protection Agency  
 Brownfields  
 USDA Rural Development

*Strategy 2.1: Provide guidance to new and expanding small businesses and entrepreneurs to serve the needs of the local communities and retain and attract residents who have existing connections to the area*

Action Items	Measurement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborate with the Fort Peck Assiniboine &amp; Sioux Tribes Office of Economic Development on business attraction and development of new business opportunities</li> </ul>	<p><i>GNDC Measurements (Quarterly)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of incidences of community assistance</li> <li>Number of incidences of county assistance</li> <li>Number of projects assisted</li> <li>Number of state dollars managed</li> <li>Number of federal dollars managed</li> <li>Number of private dollars applied for/managed</li> <li>NAICS codes for IRP, RMAP</li> <li>Number of DUNS</li> <li>Number of micro clients interested in lending and CDFI programs</li> <li>Number of trainings and workshops held</li> <li>Number of value-added agriculture operations created or expanded</li> <li>Number of professional development opportunities completed by staff</li> </ul> <p><i>Innovation Intelligence Index Measurements: Employment &amp; Productivity (Every 1-5 Years)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overall patents</li> <li>Change in average patenting rate</li> <li>Patent diversity</li> <li>Overall industry performance</li> <li>Industry diversity</li> <li>Industry cluster strength</li> <li>Overall GDP</li> <li>Overall job growth to population growth ratio</li> <li>Change in share of high-tech industry employment</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with Child Care Connections of Montana to help establish new licensed child care providers and increase capacity</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support hospitality and tourism-related businesses within Missouri River Country tourism region and the Fort Peck Reservation to further develop and promote their services and offerings</li> </ul>	

*Strategy 2.2: Encourage diversification of local economies through value-added agriculture opportunities that increase the number of value-added agriculture operations in the region*

Action Items	Measurement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify local, regional, and state experts to deliver training opportunities for value-added agriculture</li> </ul>	<p><i>GNDC Measurements (Quarterly)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of incidences of community assistance</li> <li>Number of incidences of county assistance</li> <li>Number of projects assisted</li> <li>Number of state dollars managed</li> <li>Number of federal dollars managed</li> <li>Number of private dollars applied for/managed</li> <li>NAICS codes for IRP, RMAP</li> <li>Number of DUNS</li> <li>Number of micro clients interested in lending and CDFI programs</li> <li>Number of trainings and workshops held</li> <li>Number of value-added agriculture operations created or expanded</li> <li>Number of professional development opportunities completed by staff</li> </ul> <p><i>Innovation Intelligence Index Measurements: Employment &amp; Productivity (Every 1-5 Years)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overall patents</li> <li>Change in average patenting rate</li> <li>Patent diversity</li> <li>Overall industry performance</li> <li>Industry diversity</li> <li>Industry cluster strength</li> <li>Overall GDP</li> <li>Overall job growth to population growth ratio</li> <li>Change in share of high-tech industry employment</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hold training opportunities throughout the region to educate community members and agricultural producers on the economic impact of value-added agriculture</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide technical assistance for business development of value-added agriculture (i.e., business plan development and marketing assistance) to area farmers, ranchers, and agribusinesses</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hold business plan training opportunities for agriculture producers and agribusinesses throughout the region</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand the current mentoring network for new participants exploring and developing their value-added product; mentoring relationships will provide participants with technical support, guide product development, and opportunity to share best practices</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide ag business assistance and help value-added agriculture businesses obtain funding (public or private, loan or grant)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support agriculture businesses in navigating opportunities and</li> </ul>	

challenges related to agri-tourism options	
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*Strategy 2.3: Assist area leaders and policy council members as they develop and update planning documents (growth policies, housing plans, capital improvement plans, etc.) to increase their economic resiliency*

Action Items	Measurement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain a database of growth policies, capital improvements plans and disaster emergency plans in the district</li> </ul>	<p><i>GNDC Measurements (Quarterly)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of incidences of community assistance</li> <li>Number of incidences of county assistance</li> <li>Number of projects assisted</li> <li>Number of state dollars managed</li> <li>Number of federal dollars managed</li> <li>Number of private dollars applied for/managed</li> <li>NAICS codes for IRP, RMAP</li> <li>Number of DUNS</li> <li>Number of micro clients interested in lending and CDFI programs</li> <li>Number of trainings and workshops held</li> <li>Number of value-added agriculture operations created or expanded</li> <li>Number of professional development opportunities completed by staff</li> </ul> <p><i>Innovation Intelligence Index Measurements: Employment &amp; Productivity (Every 1-5 Years)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overall patents</li> <li>Change in average patenting rate</li> <li>Patent diversity</li> <li>Overall industry performance</li> <li>Industry diversity</li> <li>Industry cluster strength</li> <li>Overall GDP</li> <li>Overall job growth to population growth ratio</li> <li>Change in share of high-tech industry employment</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assist communities with updating planning documents in a timely and consistent manner</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitate education opportunities for communities to learn how to utilize planning documents to leverage funding, plan for large improvements, and become more resilient to future economic or natural disasters</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hire a regional community development specialist to collaborate with area engineering firms and community leaders to assist with applying for loans and grants to support the cost of planning efforts and address infrastructure needs including consistent broadband access</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assist communities with the development of plans, and funding opportunities, for rehabilitation of blighted properties - commercial and residential - to encourage new growth</li> </ul>	



*Strategy 2.4: Development of Brownfields areas or locations that have the potential for reuse through collaboration with Montana DEQ and US EPA Brownfields*

Action Items	Measurement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Act as the lead entity for the Eastern Montana Brownfields Coalition, to assist communities in identifying contaminated areas with potential redevelopment</li> </ul>	<p><i>GNDC Measurements (Quarterly)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of incidences of community assistance</li> <li>Number of incidences of county assistance</li> <li>Number of projects assisted</li> <li>Number of state dollars managed</li> <li>Number of federal dollars managed</li> <li>Number of private dollars applied for/managed</li> <li>NAICS codes for IRP, RMAP</li> <li>Number of DUNS</li> <li>Number of micro clients interested in lending and CDFI programs</li> <li>Number of trainings and workshops held</li> <li>Number of value-added agriculture operations created or expanded</li> <li>Number of professional development opportunities completed by staff</li> </ul> <p><i>Innovation Intelligence Index Measurements: Employment &amp; Productivity (Every 1-5 Years)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overall patents</li> <li>Change in average patenting rate</li> <li>Patent diversity</li> <li>Overall industry performance</li> <li>Industry diversity</li> <li>Industry cluster strength</li> <li>Overall GDP</li> <li>Overall job growth to population growth ratio</li> <li>Change in share of high-tech industry employment</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain a database of properties (public and private) that have potential for redevelopment</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Market the EPA Brownfields programs to the EDD's within the Eastern Montana Brownfields Coalition</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain the Brownfields revolving loan cleanup fund to maintain a resource for redevelopment of contaminated properties</li> </ul>	

*Strategy 2.5: Support efforts to develop and offer expanded energy resources available in the region to increase stability*

Action Items	Measurement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage thoughtful natural resource practices through information sharing and workshops on topics such as (but not limited to) carbon sequestration, regenerative agriculture, sustainable growth, solar and wind power, etc.</li> </ul>	<p><i>GNDC Measurements (Quarterly)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of incidences of community assistance</li> <li>Number of incidences of county assistance</li> <li>Number of projects assisted</li> <li>Number of state dollars managed</li> <li>Number of federal dollars managed</li> <li>Number of private dollars applied for/managed</li> <li>NAICS codes for IRP, RMAP</li> <li>Number of DUNS</li> <li>Number of micro clients interested in lending and CDFI programs</li> <li>Number of trainings and workshops held</li> <li>Number of value-added agriculture operations created or expanded</li> <li>Number of professional development opportunities completed by staff</li> </ul> <p><i>Innovation Intelligence Index Measurements: Employment &amp; Productivity (Every 1-5 Years)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overall patents</li> <li>Change in average patenting rate</li> <li>Patent diversity</li> <li>Overall industry performance</li> <li>Industry diversity</li> <li>Industry cluster strength</li> <li>Overall GDP</li> <li>Overall job growth to population growth ratio</li> <li>Change in share of high-tech industry employment</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partner with the Montana DEQ to implement a system of EV-charging stations along US Highway 2, offering potential to diversify the existing businesses and encourage additional tourism activities</li> </ul>	

## GOAL 3: POSITIVELY IMPACT AREA RESIDENTS' QUALITY OF LIFE INCLUDING ACCESS TO HOUSING

### Implementation Partners

GNDC region Cities, Towns and Counties  
 Fort Peck Assiniboine & Sioux Tribes, Office of Economic Development  
 Fort Peck Community College  
 Local Chambers of Commerce & Agriculture  
 Local Development Organizations  
 Local Job Services of Montana  
 Missouri River Country Tourism  
 Montana Community Foundation  
 Montana Cooperative Development Center  
 Montana Department of Commerce  
 Big Sky Trust Fund - Planning  
 Community Development Block Grant - Economic Development

Certified Regional Development Centers  
 Housing Coalition  
 Montana Main Street Program  
 Montana Business Attraction  
 Montana Healthcare Foundation  
 Montana Economic Developers Association  
 MSU-Extension  
 Montana Department of Agriculture - Food & Ag Development Centers  
 Montana Nonprofit Association  
 NeighborWorks Montana  
 US Economic Development Administration  
 USDA Rural Development

*Strategy 3.1: Assist cities, counties and organizations working to provide safe and healthy housing options to retain and attract residents who have existing connections to the area*

Action Items	Measurement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Offer educational opportunities for communities to learn about strategies for redevelopment of blighted properties and funding mechanisms for development of safe and healthy housing</li> </ul>	<p><i>GNDC Measurements (Quarterly)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determine the number of housing units - region wide housing plan</li> <li>Housing and healthcare study - healthcare resources in the region and how to get them into homes, not workforce housing but regular housing</li> <li>Number of housing counseling session hours</li> <li>Number of grant applications submitted to federal, state, private funders</li> </ul> <p><i>Innovation Intelligence Index Measurements: Economic Well-Being (Every 1-5 Years)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Average unemployment rate</li> <li>Average net migration</li> <li>Overall residential internet connectivity</li> <li>Broadband infrastructure and adoption</li> <li>Broadband adoption barriers</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assist cities and counties with applications to funding sources for housing rehab or development projects</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete a region-wide housing study to identify areas of need, and opportunities to develop housing in the region</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement the USDA Housing Preservation program to assist low</li> </ul>	

and very-low income homeowners with health and safety rehabilitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall compensation</li> <li>• Per capita personal income growth</li> <li>• Average poverty rate</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement a supportive housing learning collaborative that engages stakeholders across a six-county region of Northeastern Montana and the Fort Peck Reservation; conduct a study of the housing services in the region to determine areas where healthcare services are/can be working with housing services to assist the most vulnerable populations of the region; create a registry of tenancy support services and care management providers that serve the housing insecure and homeless population and an action plan to increase housing access and coordinate service providers with clients engaged in housing programs; engage city councils, county commissions, and chambers of commerce in the region to identify key partners; contract with the Corporation for Supportive Housing to facilitate stakeholder engagement, community education, and the development of best practices to share with the community</li> </ul>	

*Strategy 3.2: Support the development and expansion efforts of communities to provide quality healthcare services to the region's residents*

Action Items	Measurement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assist cities and counties to complete planning efforts for rehabilitation or development of hospitals, nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and senior centers</li> </ul>	<p><i>GNDC Measurements (Quarterly)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine the number of housing units - region wide housing plan</li> <li>• Housing and healthcare study - healthcare resources in the region and how to get them into homes, not</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with cities and counties to secure funding for rehabilitation, expansion or construction of hospitals, nursing homes, assisting living facilities and senior centers</li> </ul>	<p>workforce housing but regular housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of housing counseling session hours</li> <li>• Number of grant applications submitted to federal, state, private funders</li> </ul> <p><i>Innovation Intelligence Index Measurements: Economic Well-Being (Every 1-5 Years)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Average unemployment rate</li> <li>• Average net migration</li> <li>• Overall residential internet connectivity</li> <li>• Broadband infrastructure and adoption</li> <li>• Broadband adoption barriers</li> <li>• Overall compensation</li> <li>• Per capita personal income growth</li> <li>• Average poverty rate</li> </ul>
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*Strategy 3.3: Facilitate personal wealth growth through education and counseling services to help decrease poverty levels*

Action Items	Measurement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer Homebuyer Education counseling and classes through a partnership with NeighborWorks Montana</li> </ul>	<p><i>GNDC Measurements (Quarterly)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine the number of housing units - region wide housing plan</li> <li>• Housing and healthcare study - healthcare resources in the region and how to get them into homes, not workforce housing but regular housing</li> <li>• Number of housing counseling session hours</li> <li>• Number of grant applications submitted to federal, state, private funders</li> </ul> <p><i>Innovation Intelligence Index Measurements: Economic Well-Being (Every 1-5 Years)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Average unemployment rate</li> <li>• Average net migration</li> <li>• Overall residential internet connectivity</li> <li>• Broadband infrastructure and adoption</li> <li>• Broadband adoption barriers</li> <li>• Overall compensation</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold financial education workshops in partnership with realtors, mortgage lenders, banks, credit unions, and the Fort Peck Housing Authority Resident Opportunities and Self-Sufficiency program</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Per capita personal income growth</li> <li>• Average poverty rate</li> </ul>
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*Strategy 3.4: Promote a sustainable and equitable food system within the region by strengthening local and regional value-added ag industry infrastructure and addressing residents' interests in purchasing more food locally*

Action Items	Measurement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work to better educate local grocery stores on the importance of “locally grown food” and the benefits to the local economy of supporting value-added products; provide them with opportunities to add locally grown products to their store</li> </ul>	<p><i>GNDC Measurements (Quarterly)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine the number of housing units - region wide housing plan</li> <li>• Housing and healthcare study - healthcare resources in the region and how to get them into homes, not workforce housing but regular housing</li> <li>• Number of housing counseling session hours</li> <li>• Number of grant applications submitted to federal, state, private funders</li> </ul> <p><i>Innovation Intelligence Index Measurements: Economic Well-Being (Every 1-5 Years)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Average unemployment rate</li> <li>• Average net migration</li> <li>• Overall residential internet connectivity</li> <li>• Broadband infrastructure and adoption</li> <li>• Broadband adoption barriers</li> <li>• Overall compensation</li> <li>• Per capita personal income growth</li> <li>• Average poverty rate</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with value-added producers in the region to make their products available to local consumers</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement a marketing and networking campaign that will result in more schools sourcing beef products from local producers</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage the development of distribution networks and cooperatives to increase local access of products and reduce costs to business owners</li> </ul>	

*Strategy 3.5: Encourage the development of partnerships and coalitions to address the economic needs of the region, avoid duplication of services, and improve access to information or resources for residents of the region*

Action Items	Measurement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage communities to participate in the Montana State</li> </ul>	<p><i>GNDC Measurements (Quarterly)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine the number of housing units -</li> </ul>

University Extension, “Reimagining Rural” course to better understand economic opportunities and develop strategies for community-led economic development efforts	<p>region wide housing plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing and healthcare study - healthcare resources in the region and how to get them into homes, not workforce housing but regular housing</li> <li>• Number of housing counseling session hours</li> <li>• Number of grant applications submitted to federal, state, private funders</li> </ul> <p><i>Innovation Intelligence Index Measurements: Economic Well-Being (Every 1-5 Years)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Average unemployment rate</li> <li>• Average net migration</li> <li>• Overall residential internet connectivity</li> <li>• Broadband infrastructure and adoption</li> <li>• Broadband adoption barriers</li> <li>• Overall compensation</li> <li>• Per capita personal income growth</li> <li>• Average poverty rate</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate education opportunities for communities to learn about community development planning tools, methods, and project development</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partner with the Montana Business Attraction team to teach communities about resources available to attract new businesses</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assist communities in their efforts to plan for future disaster resiliency and recovery</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support communities in their work to update existing infrastructure, addressing funding shortages and lack of staffing</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with communities to secure consistent broadband access and adoption</li> </ul>	



## GREAT NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (CEDs) AND ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND RESILIENCY ADDENDUM (ERRA)

### EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

*How do we evaluate the inputs and the outcomes?*

#### **GOAL 1: Support Small Businesses and Entrepreneurs in Northeastern Montana**

##### *GNDC Measurements (Quarterly)*

- Jobs created and/or retained
- Number of coalitions
- Number of small businesses and entrepreneurs who participate in GNDC events
- Number of new businesses assisted
- Number of existing businesses assisted
- NAICS codes for assisted businesses
- Amount of state and federal loans and grant clients received through GNDC assistance
- Amount of Indian Equity Fund clients received through GNDC assistance
- Number of attendees for trainings and workshops
- Number of clients, outreach, and collaboration hours
- Number of networking opportunities
- Number of professional development opportunities completed by staff

##### *Innovation Intelligence Index Measurements: Business Dynamics (Every 1-5 Years)*

- Jobs attributed to establishment births to total employment ratio
- Overall establishment dynamics
- Establishment births to deaths ratio
- Traded sector establishment births to all establishment ratio
- Overall establishment formation
- Change in establishment births to all establishment ratio
- Establishment expansions to contractions ratio
- Avg high-tech, early-in-life-cycle establishment ratio

##### *Innovation Intelligence Index Measurements: Business Profile (Every 1-5 Years)*

- Overall proprietorship
- Farm operators with internet access
- Proprietorship rate
- Change in proprietorship rate
- Proprietor income to total wages and salaries ratio



## **GOAL 2: Encourage and Promote Economic Growth and Stability**

### *GNDC Measurements (Quarterly)*

- Number of incidences of community assistance
- Number of incidences of county assistance
- Number of projects assisted
- Number of state dollars managed
- Number of federal dollars managed
- Number of private dollars applied for/managed
- NAICS codes for IRP, RMAP
- Number of DUNS
- Number of micro clients interested in lending and CDFI programs
- Number of trainings and workshops held
- Number of value-added agriculture operations created or expanded
- Number of professional development opportunities completed by staff

### *Innovation Intelligence Index Measurements: Employment & Productivity (Every 1-5 Years)*

- Overall patents
- Change in average patenting rate
- Patent diversity
- Overall industry performance
- Industry diversity
- Industry cluster strength
- Overall GDP
- Overall job growth to population growth ratio
- Change in share of high-tech industry employment

## **GOAL 3: Positively Impact Area Residents' Quality of Life Including Access to Housing**

### *GNDC Measurements (Quarterly)*

- Determine the number of housing units - region wide housing plan
- Housing and healthcare study - healthcare resources in the region and how to get them into homes, not workforce housing but regular housing
- Number of housing counseling session hours
- Number of grant applications submitted to federal, state, private funders

### *Innovation Intelligence Index Measurements: Economic Well-Being (Every 1-5 Years)*

- Average unemployment rate
- Average net migration
- Overall residential internet connectivity
- Broadband infrastructure and adoption
- Broadband adoption barriers
- Overall compensation
- Per capita personal income growth
- Average poverty rate



## GREAT NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (CEDs) AND ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND RESILIENCY ADDENDUM (ERRA)

### ADDENDUM: ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND RESILIENCY

*How do we increase our resiliency and achieve economic stability?*

The people who live in the six-county area served by the Great Northern Development Corporation (GNDC) are no strangers to economic challenges. The region continues to persevere despite nearly a 100-year historically declining population, one of the most remote locations in the continental U.S., a lack of a diversified economy, a history of oppression and continued natural disasters including floods and droughts.

There isn't an easy solution or one path to take in achieving economic stability. In fact, the concept of economic resilience and how to achieve it has been incorporated throughout the CEDs plan, and the goals, objectives, strategic direction and action plan are all focused on strengthening the area's resiliency.

### KEY COMPONENTS OF ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND RESILIENCY

Planning→Collaboration→Infrastructure→Economic Growth→Stability→Resiliency

Funding→Appearances→Workforce Attraction→Stability→Resiliency

Housing→Workforce Attraction→Stability→Resiliency

Workforce Development→Business Growth→Workforce Attraction→Stability→Resiliency

### PRIORITIES

The following focal points were developed to help create stability and position the region for recovery and resiliency:

- Collaborating with counties, communities, businesses, organizations, private and public entities and other organizations in the region to make the most of existing resources
- Working with entrepreneurs and small businesses
- Building on the area's strengths including agriculture
- Supporting initiatives that focus on retaining and/or attracting people who have existing connections to the area

## GOALS

The GNDC's three goals are cornerstones in achieving economic recovery and resiliency:

- Goal 1: Support Small Businesses and Entrepreneurs in Northeastern Montana
- Goal 2: Encourage and Promote Economic Growth and Stability
- Goal 3: Positively Impact Area Residents' Quality of Life Including Access to Housing

## STABILITY AND RESILIENCY STRATEGIES

The following strategies and their specifics, along with partners involved, are outlined in the CEDS strategic direction and action plan and highlight the emphasis placed on stability and resiliency throughout the CEDS planning document.

*Strategy 1.1: Provide business planning technical assistance to support existing and new small businesses and entrepreneurs and to help increase their resiliency*

*Strategy 1.2: Provide financing to those businesses that don't have collateral by creating and sustaining loan programs that meet capital needs of business start-ups and expansions*

*Strategy 1.3: Collaborate with local, Tribal, State, and Federal entities to provide workforce training and apprenticeship opportunities to help increase stability for local business owners*

*Strategy 1.4: Help business owners with strategies to become more resilient during times of economic downturn*

*Strategy 1.5: Assist businesses to become more competitive in existing and expanded markets and increase their overall resiliency*

*Strategy 1.6: Collaborate with the Fort Peck Assiniboine & Sioux Tribes economic development office to implement common CEDS strategies and goals and support regional stability*

*Strategy 1.7: Build GNDC staff capacity to better understand needs of business owners and entrepreneurs*

*Strategy 2.1: Provide guidance to new and expanding small businesses and entrepreneurs to serve the needs of the local communities and retain and attract residents who have existing connections to the area*

*Strategy 2.2: Encourage diversification of local economies through value-added agriculture opportunities that increase the number of value-added agriculture operations in the region*

*Strategy 2.3: Assist area leaders and policy council members as they develop and update*

*planning documents (growth policies, housing plans, capital improvement plans, etc.) to increase their economic resiliency*

*Strategy 2.4: Development of Brownfields areas or locations that have the potential for reuse through collaboration with Montana DEQ and US EPA Brownfields*

*Strategy 2.5: Support efforts to develop and offer expanded energy resources available in the region to increase stability*

*Strategy 3.1: Assist cities, counties and organizations working to provide safe and healthy housing options to retain and attract residents who have existing connections to the area*

*Strategy 3.2: Support the development and expansion efforts of communities to provide quality healthcare services to the region's residents*

*Strategy 3.3: Facilitate personal wealth growth through education and counseling services to help decrease poverty levels*

*Strategy 3.4: Promote a sustainable and equitable food system within the region by strengthening local and regional value-added ag industry infrastructure and addressing residents' interests in purchasing more food locally*

*Strategy 3.5: Encourage the development of partnerships and coalitions to address the economic needs of the region, avoid duplication of services, and improve access to information or resources for residents of the region*

Specifics on the action plans related to each of these strategies can be found in the Strategic Direction and Action Plan section of the CEDS plan, and the measurements of their successes can be found in the Evaluation Framework section.

## BACKGROUND

**Short-Term and Long-Term Impacts of COVID-19 Pandemic.** Specific studies of the short-term and long-term impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in the region have not been conducted. However, a few of the immediate impacts that were recognized during the pandemic were the disruptions in distribution of goods and availability of services and the increase in supply costs. The pandemic also highlighted how remote Northeastern Montana is and how hard it is to access food, despite being an agricultural area.

**Regional Food Economy Study.** To better understand the impacts from the pandemic and to develop greater resiliency, GNDC and the Eastern Montana Food & Ad Development Center were two of the co-sponsors of the Regional Food Economy Study: A Snapshot of the Food System in an 11-County Region of Northeastern and Eastern Montana that was conducted in 2021. The purpose of the study was to determine how GNDC can support the development of a local/regional food system, to enhance economic development, food security and community

health. The study showed that rural communities and their economies are evolving; local/regional food pathways exist; residents are interested in purchasing local/regional food; and producers are interested in distributing locally. The study also noted that the existing infrastructure is focused on commodity-scale and that finding and providing local food options isn't always convenient or consistent for consumers, producers or retailers.

As a result of the study's findings, the Food and Ag Development Center is renewing efforts to strengthen the regional food system by supporting innovation and collaboration and through communication, education, technical assistance, and championing leaders in the industry. These initiatives will also support the region's economic recovery and increase stability.

**Pandemic Response Issues and What's Needed.** As part of the area-wide survey that GNDC conducted during the summer of 2022, residents were asked to give their opinions on what didn't work well during the pandemic and what's needed to make this area more resilient to other potential future crises - i.e., fires, droughts, pandemics, boom/bust cycles, etc.

Top reactions from residents about what didn't work well included: closing down businesses and schools; challenges with supply chain issues and food shortages; workforce challenges and shortages; and having one-size-fits-all mandates implemented that didn't take into consideration the rural location of the six counties.

Residents believe that leadership and collaboration are needed to make this area more resilient to future crises, as well as planning, economic development and community involvement.

This community feedback has been incorporated into the SWOT analysis as well as the strategic direction and action plan.

**Planning for the Future.** One of the key components of the action plan is to hire a regional community development specialist to work with the communities throughout the region and support their efforts as funding sources and resources continue to be substantial threats. For example, although relief funds are available from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA), the region's community organizations do not have the human capacity to manage the planning and updates needed. They also have small tax bases, thanks to small populations, and don't have the funding available to address infrastructure needs. An additional challenge is that funding sources for infrastructure projects are often focused on expanding communities and creating new infrastructure; whereas the communities in Northeastern Montana aren't expanding. They need adequate funding to fix, safely demolish and/or update the existing infrastructure.

GNDC's regional community development specialist will coordinate with local leaders and stakeholders to identify technical assistance needs, bring pandemic recovery specific training and resources to the region (virtually and in-person when possible), and work closely with city and county officials to prioritize infrastructure projects that will build local resilience in the face of future similar pandemics or economic disasters.