



Online News



April 5: [Keys to Hiring Right Employees](#) Free Webinar
April 5-6: [Future of Coal Events](#) -Wheeler Center
April 10, 12: [NADC Business Webinars, 3pm](#)
April 12: RTA Working Group Call, 9am
April 15-17: Governor's [Conference on Tourism](#)
April 18-19: [Forum for Coal Reliant Communities](#)
April 18-19: [Lewistown Resource Roundtable SharkTank](#)
April 26-27: MEDA Spring Conference

[SBDC Training Calendar](#)
[MNA Training Calendar](#)



May 1-3: [MT Stormwater Conference](#)
May 3: [Critical Customer Service Skills](#) Free Webinar
May 3: Billings [Early Stage MT](#)
May 3: MT [SBA Awards](#)
May 7-8: Choteau Community Review Phase 2
May 8-10: [Building Active Communities](#)
May 14-15: Poplar Community Review Phase 1
May 17: Missoula [Early Stage MT](#)
May 22: Bozeman [Early Stage MT](#)

Save the date:
June 21-23 MT Young Professionals Summit, Butte

FINALLY! APRIL IS HERE...SEE YOU SOON AT THE MEDA SPRING CONFERENCE:

MEDA PRE-CONFERENCE

One of the main missions of MEDA is to increase the professional skills of those working in the field of Economic Development. The Professional Development and Scholarship Committee is offering "**Economic Development 101**" as the topic for the pre-conference training, April 26th, in Dillon. The agenda is unique in that following an overview of major components of Economic Development, participants will take part in "hands on" project problem solving.

Thursday, April 26th

Pre-Conference 8:30am – 11:45am	Professional Development Training MEDA Intro to Economic Development 8:30am - 8:45am Introductions; What is MEDA? 8:45am - 10:00am Intro to Economic Development Overview and Major Components. Brett Doney, Great Falls Development and Sue Taylor, Beartooth RC&D 10:00am - 10:15am Break 10:15am - 11:45am Case Studies showcasing Montana Programs, Partners, and Resources at work. Revitalization – Jim Davison, ALDC Business Retention and Expansion – Kim Morisaki, MT West Entrepreneurial/Start-Up – Julie Jaksha, Headwaters RC&D
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[Sponsor](#)

[Agenda](#)

[Registration](#)

ROCKIN' IT RURAL UPDATE

The agenda is rolling and we are set to start **Rockin' it Rural: Thriving in Small Town Montana!** Check out the updates to the agenda, get your lodging in place, and register today!



2nd QUARTER ROUND OPENS: MEDA SCHOLARSHIP

Get your 2nd Quarter Rick Jones Memorial MEDA Scholarship Ap in before June 15th! The Scholarship Committee received two applications during the 1st Quarter. An announcement will be made soon.
<http://www.medamembers.org/meda/membership/scholarships>.

FEATURING W2ASACT

Water, Wastewater and Solid Waste Action Coordinating Team
(W2ASACT)



[W2ASACT](#) is an incredible organization that has done much over the years to make water infrastructure projects a little more bearable. If you are not familiar with the work of W2ASACT here is info to get you started:

- ⇒ Watch this entertaining yet professional video on [working through a water project for your community](#).
- ⇒ Don't miss the "[Coal in Montana](#)" presentation by Sonja Nowakowski of the State's Legislative Fiscal Division, on the WASACT website. Very interesting presentation.

MONTANA'S FIRST EVER COMMUNITY REVIEW

CHOTEAU, MONTANA COMMUNITY REVIEW

MARCH 19 – 20, 2018 * Phase 1



A service of the Montana Economic Developers Association in partnership with Montana Department of Commerce, Montana State University Extension, the University of Idaho and the University of Wyoming.

This project is supported by USDA's Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, Grant #2016-10945. It is part of the AFRI Foundational program.

Montana's first Community Review took place in Choteau, March 19 – 20. The Home Team was organized by the Choteau Area Port Authority which is in the region of Sweetgrass Development. The Advance Visiting Team for Phase 1 included Dr. Lorie Higgins, University of Idaho, Dr. Paul Lachapelle, Montana State University and Gloria O'Rourke, MEDA. Gus Byrom, MDOC/CDBG and Sue Taylor, Beartooth RC&D are a part of the MT Design Team but were not able to be on-the-ground in Choteau.

The Advance Visiting Team toured the area and enjoyed meeting/hearing from over 150 people in the Choteau area. The turnout and community participation were excellent. A town meeting was held to review the process and summarize all that the team heard. The next steps include a preliminary report from Phase 1 activities and to form a Visiting Team of experts to return to Choteau and dig deep into issues. The return visit will take place May 7th and 8th.



Sarah Converse Facilitator and Scribe



L to R: Gloria O'Rourke, Lorie Higgins, and Paul Lachapelle; Phase 1 Advance Team for Choteau



Meeting of Choteau's finest...do not reverse over a double yellow line on Main Street. Thankfully, this smiling officer issued only a warning.

Infrastructure” will be held on **April 10 from 1:00 to 2:30 p.m. ET**. Registration is available [here](#). “Safe Pedestrian Crossings at Transit” is scheduled for **April 19 from 2:00 to 3:30 p.m. ET**. Click [here](#) to register. Both webinars are hosted by the Safe Transportation for Every Pedestrian (STEP) program. Details on the program are available [here](#).

⇒ **Senate CDBG Dear Colleague Letter Supports \$3.5B in FY2019**

A Dear Colleague letter is circulating in the Senate supporting \$3.5 billion for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program in fiscal year (FY) 2019. A similar House letter led by Rep. Jim McGovern (D-MA) closed on March 13, receiving 181 signatures. The Senate letter is led by Senators Dianne Feinstein (D-CA), Chris Coons (D-DE), and Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) and will soon be circulating; deadline for signatures is **April 13**. Click [here](#) for the letter. Senate contact information is available [here](#) – reach out to your senators and encourage them to add their names!

⇒ **Materials Available from NADO Research Foundation’s “An Afternoon with the CEDS” Workshop**

Staff from over 25 Economic Development Districts from across the country came together in Arlington, Virginia for “An Afternoon with the CEDS” on March 21. Topics covered included stakeholder outreach, engaging with your CEDS committee, new platforms for disseminating the CEDS, plan alignment, and more. Click [here](#) to access the workshop materials. Additional CEDS training and resource materials are available at www.CEDSCentral.com. For more information, contact NADO Associate Director Brett Schwartz at bschwartz@nado.org.



Native American Development Corporation presents...



Monthly Webinar Series
The Second Week of Each
Month from April to July
Tuesdays and Thursdays

Please join the Native American Development Corporation's

Native American Micro Enterprise Business Center webinar series.

April's topics: Tuesday April 10 is an introduction to Business Planning

Thursday April 12 Business Planning: The Company

For More Information call:

Tim Guardipee Project Director NADC, tguardipee@nadc-nabn.org or 406.259.3804

Funded in part through a Cooperative Agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration

www.nadc-nabn.org

17 N. 26th St Billings, MT 59101 (406) 259-3804

Ledger Art provided by John Pepion
www.pepionledgerart.com

⇒ **Forum for Coal-Reliant Communities in Montana Scheduled for April 18 – 19 in Billings**

Registration is open for “[Strengthening Economies in Montana: A Forum for Coal Reliant Communities](#)” to be held in Billings, MT on **April 18 and 19** and hosted by the [NADO Research Foundation](#) and the [National Association of Counties](#) with support from the [U.S. Economic Development Administration \(Denver Regional Office\)](#). This free convening will bring together stakeholders from the public and private sectors for an educational and interactive gathering to share best practices, lessons learned, and new opportunities to support economic diversification. Click [here](#) to learn more and register. Contact Brett Schwartz at bschwartz@nado.org with any questions.

⇒ **Story Map Displays Benefits of CDBG and HOME for Mid-Sized Cities**

The [National League of Cities](#) (NLC) has developed a new interactive tool on impacts of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) programs for mid-sized cities. The story map, “CDBG and HOME: Essential Grants for Mid-Sized Cities,” assesses 41 mid-sized cities across the nation and how effectively each community is using CDBG and HOME. Additionally, a further study of six cities showcases specific ways that the programs are addressing unique community needs. The story map is available [here](#)

⇒ “[Working in Indian Country](#): Building Successful Business Relationships with American Indian Tribes” is a one-of-a-kind workshop that will change your understanding and enhance your experience in working with those in Montana’s Indian Country.

GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

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

⇒ **Funding Available for Local Fire Response**

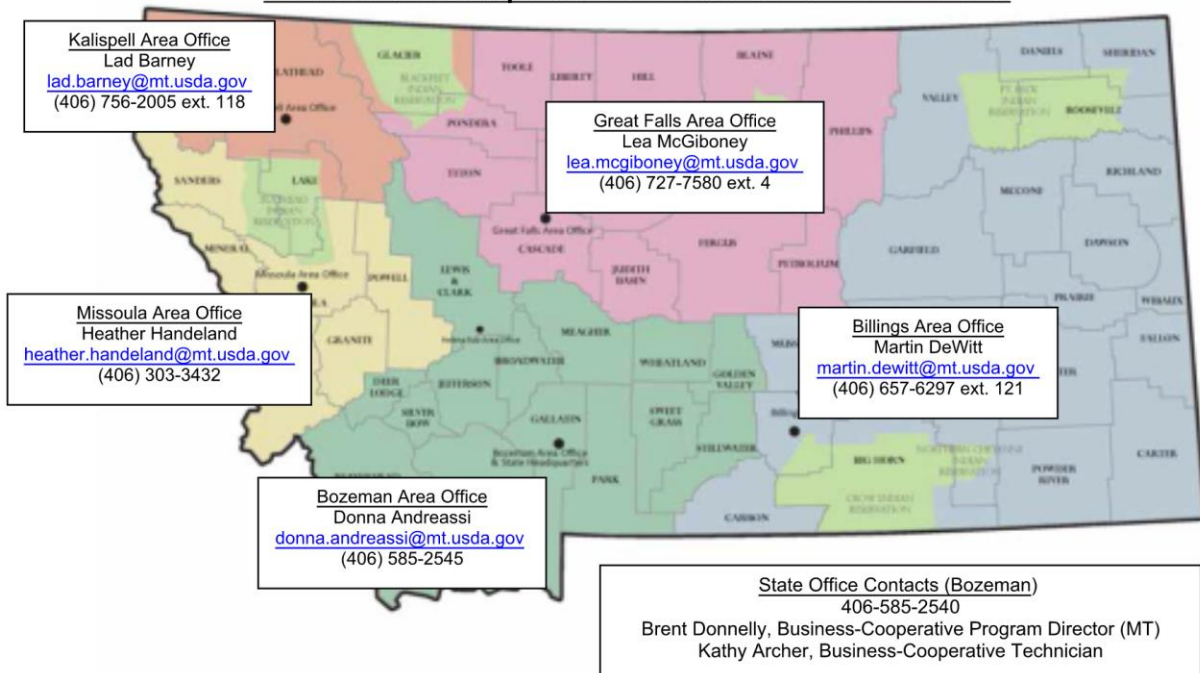
The [Federal Emergency Management Agency](#) (FEMA) is accepting applications to the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant program. Funding is available for recipients to maintain 24-hour fire department staffing and services. Various types of fire departments are eligible to apply. Applications are due **April 27**. Click [here](#) for more information.

⇒ **Women's Foundation of Montana**

The Women's Foundation of Montana advances economic independence for Montana women and creates a brighter future for girls. The Foundation supports nonprofit organizations throughout the state that work to directly improve the ability of women and girls to become more economically successful. The Foundation's grantmaking focus areas include the following: Ensure All Women Have the Tools, Skills, and Opportunity to Reach Their Full Economic Potential; Create Systemic Change to Improve the Economic Status of Women; and Advance Women's Leadership and Power. Grants ranging from \$1,000 to \$10,000 are provided for projects that are statewide or regional in nature, with a particular interest in projects taking a two-generation approach. Letters of intent must be submitted by April 30, 2018. Visit the Foundation's website to review the grant guidelines and submit an online letter of intent.

⇒ **USDA Rural Development Rural Business Development Grant (RBDG) Applications Being Accepted!** [Fact sheet](#); contact your nearest office for application details.

Local Rural Development Area Office Contacts in Montana



Rural Development • Montana State Office
2229 Boot Hill Court • Bozeman, MT 59715
Voice (406) 585-2540 • Fax (855) 576-2674

USDA Rural Development-Montana is in the process of identifying Rural Business Development Grant (RBDG) applications for anticipated Fiscal Year 2018 funding. As a reminder for those of you who've been around a while, the referenced RBDG program is the new program which combined the old RBEG and RBOG programs. Applications for any anticipated Fiscal Year 2018 funding may be submitted during the designated application window. This year due to the uncertainty of funding and numerous short Continuing Resolutions

Rural Development has determined to create one standard application window for 2018. Application submittals early in the window are encouraged. **The RBDG application window will open on March 1, 2018 and close April 30, 2018. Applications must be received no later than April 30, 2018 to be considered for any anticipated funding** during this year's funding cycle.

- ⇒ **Tribal-Researcher Capacity Building Grants – April 23.** The U.S. Department of Justice will make up to five awards of approximately \$100,000 each to build capacity for research and evaluation projects on criminal justice in Indian Country and Alaska Native Villages. Award recipients will be expected to submit a final research project that can help inform criminal justice partnerships with Tribal communities in the future.
- ⇒ **Broadband for Montana Schools Program,** which got a big boost by the state Legislature when it approved a \$2 million school broadband fund virtually unanimously. This is a terrific opportunity to get your school students connected to high-speed broadband, but \$1 million of the funding is only available until June 2018. If your school wants to take advantage of this funding opportunity we encourage you to act today and enhance broadband access for your school. You may learn more by reaching out to the Montana Department of Commerce at docbroadband@mt.gov or [406-841-2770](tel:406-841-2770) or our partners at EducationSuperHighway by emailing Elle Patterson elle@educationsuperhighway.org or calling [415-967-7454](tel:415-967-7454).
- ⇒ **USDA Community Development Grants**
- ⇒ MEDA is a member of [GrantStation](#). Email gloria if you would like the username and password.