

Projects

BREDD engages in projects throughout the region to improve the level of economic activity. If you have a project that we could assist with or if you are interested in one of our projects please contact us.

MINERAL COUNTY CHALLENGE:

BREDD is actively assisting the Mineral County Challenge. The Mineral County Challenge recently received a \$50,000 EDA grant to move forward with a community based collaborative effort to create development strategies for this largely public-lands based rural Montana county. With 85% of Mineral County under public ownership, the management of this land has the potential to make or break Mineral County's economy. The EDA grant combined with matching funds and services from Mineral County, Fish, Wildlife and Parks and the USDA Forest Service will facilitate the public meeting process and result in a strategy document for moving forward with the strongest development potential projects identified by the county's various stakeholders.

MONTANA SUSTAINABILITY CENTER:

The Montana Sustainability Center (MSC) is a non-profit corporation serving as a regional center for the advancement of environmentally sustainable building products, methods and technologies that promote the efficient use of natural resources and socially just practices, particularly in the construction industry. Local retailer Home Resource will be its anchor tenant. The MSC will include retail, office, warehouse and yard space for its commercial tenants, as well as community education and workforce training space. REGIONAL INNOVATION GRANT: BREDD is participating as a core team member of the Regional Innovation Grant (RIG) The RIG helps regional leaders develop strategies to revitalize and grow our economies. By identifying our regional resources and building partnerships between workers, industry, education economic development and workforce systems professionals the RIG will help create a growing regional economy. The RIG is funded by the US Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration. WAGE AND BENEFIT SURVEY: BREDD partnered with Montana Community Development Corporation and the Northwest Area Foundation to implement a Wage and Benefit Survey within the three county region. The survey establishes and communicates a baseline understanding of the wage and benefit (WBM) levels as a key indicator of the prosperity of the Missoula/Ravalli/Mineral Counties region. The Wage and Benefit Metric uses a point-scale system to rate the wage and benefit quality of area jobs. Repeating this survey in the future will allow economic developers to understand development trends within each county and the region. This project will serve as a pilot project for the greater Northwest Area Foundation region. WAGE AND BENEFIT SURVEY RESULTS:

- Three County Aggregate (PDF 5.1 mb)
 - Mineral County (PDF 4.7 mb)
 - Missoula County (PDF 7.0 mb)
 - Ravalli County (PDF 6.3 mb)
- The Regional Wages and Benefits Forum took place October 29th, 2007 in the Governor Room of the Florence Building (Agenda (PDF 10kb). The Forum presented (Forum Presentation (PowerPoint) the preliminary results from a Wages and Benefits Survey of 1016 businesses in the three county region; Mineral, Ravalli, and Missoula Counties. The new Wage and Benefit Metric was showcased and demonstrated. Approximately 40 people participated in the 4 hour discussion. Two panel discussions took place 1) Focusing on business owners and their successes and challenges in providing good wages and benefits to their employees; 2) A panel of community leaders discussing potential strategies and needs in the region to achieve better wages and benefits. Links: Missoulian Article*Wage and Benefit Metric Forum Presentation Wage and Benefit Metric and Preliminary Survey Results PowerPoint . *Please note that the Wage and Benefit Metric measures Wage and Benefit Quality not Job Quality. Wage and Benefits quality is one component of job quality

INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS IN OUR REGION:

BREDD compiled this list of pending infrastructure projects in our area to submit to the governor's office. The state of Montana is gathering information on projects for consideration in the proposed economic stimulus package. BREDD has updated the projects identified in the CEDS document and listed additional projects as they have come to our attention.

View the City of Missoula's ongoing Capital Improvements programs. COMMUNICATION ENGINEERING ASSESSMENT AND STRATEGY: BitterRoot Economic Development District Inc (BREDD) is embarking in an effort to implement a Communication Engineering Assessment and Strategy for the three county region (Mineral, Ravalli, and Missoula) in partnership with the three counties and the area economic development organizations. The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the district identified under the Infrastructure Section an objective to improve

communication infrastructure: Develop the region's capacity to continually expand telecommunication infrastructure in order to enhance the capability of the region's businesses to compete in today's global economy. This study would include existing infrastructure inventory, community needs assessment, available technologies, and recommended actions to improve communication infrastructure in underserved areas. The need for this can be argued from many angles, health, emergency services, education, and of course economic development. BREDD is not promoting one over the other, but believes that they are all tied together supporting overall community health and quality of life.

Once funds are secured BREDD would work with its partners to develop an RFP to hire an engineering firm to perform the work. This study would provide communities with the foundation to pursue funding for recommended projects. **COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY:** BREDD published the 2007 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the three county region. Work Groups representing five economic sectors, infrastructure, business development, workforce/education, redevelopment, and land use met throughout the months January and February. In March these groups presented their recommendation to a larger group and received input. Results of these meeting can be found on the BREDD Blog <http://www.breddinc.blogspot.com/> . These recommendation have been passed on to a Strategy Committee that is developing the CEDS document. This a five year strategy that will guide economic development within the region and can be used to secure funding for projects alligned with the strategy. CEDS 2007