

# Eastern Plains Economic Development Corporation

*2021 Annual Report*

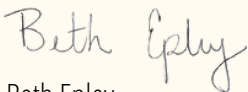


# A letter from the Executive Director

As we look back on 2021, a year full of new challenges, Eastern Plains Economic Development Corporation continued to serve the people of Carter, Dawson, Fallon, Prairie and Wibaux Counties with renewed resolve to grow our economy. Our staff of economic and community development practitioners continued to assist local governments and organizations with infrastructure and funding and entrepreneurs with the business growth and start up needs.

We see limitless possibilities in our rural region and will work diligently to provide support in making southeastern Montana the best place to live and work. We look forward to putting together a 5-year Comprehensive Development Strategy.

I am thankful to work with such a talented team and a Board of Directors that is committed to improving our community every day.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Beth Epley".

Beth Epley  
Executive Director



# Our Team



**Beth Epley**

*Executive Director*



**Dara Deines**

*Community Development  
Specialist*



**Melissa Higbee**

*Downtown Development  
Specialist*



**Alissa Miller**

*Food and Agriculture  
Specialist*

# Growing through Economic and Community Development

## 2021 Grant Funding

Eastern Plains Economic Development provides grant writing and grant administration for nonprofits, public agencies and businesses throughout the five-county region. We partner with multiple organizations to find funding that meets the needs of the organization. EPEDC has access to a variety of resources that allows us to acquire grants from a broad range of areas.

Some of the grants that we wrote and administrated this year included funding for the Swimming Pool Park in Wibaux, support for Makoshika Wellness projects including their annual "Journey to the Badlands" Triathlon and a CBDG Planning Grant to update the City of Baker's Zoning Regulations.

In 2021, EPEDC grant writing resulted in **\$1,050,095** of new grant funding for our communities.



# Growing through Economic and Community Development

## 2021 Grant Funding

In addition to the new grant funding that EPEDC secured for our cities, counties, businesses and nonprofits, we also worked tirelessly on providing grant administration for projects that had received grant funding previously. While grant writing is fun and exciting, EPEDC's expertise in grant administration allows us to successfully move projects from ideas into implementation.

EPEDC administrated a number of projects throughout the region. Many of these projects required multiple grants and funding sources.

It is EPEDC's job to ensure that all compliance is adhered to throughout the funding cycle. Some of the projects that we administrated this year included the Montana Avenue Water Main Replacement Project in Baker, a Preliminary Engineering Report and Feasibility Study for Irrigation in the Fallon Flats and the new Dahl Memorial Healthcare Facility.

In 2021, EPEDC administrated **\$5,972,145** of grant funds, which represents

**\$26,352,253**

total project costs that EPEDC managed.



# Growing through Economic and Community Development

In our five county region providing community development is done through assisting our towns, cities, and counties on different project needs. See some of those projects listed below.

Dahl Memorial  
Healthcare Facility

Baker Montana  
Ave. Watermain

O'Fallon Historical  
Museum

Reimagining  
Rural  
participants

Downtown  
Master Plan  
Committee

Fallon Flat  
Irrigation  
Project

Wibaux County  
Nursing Home

Baker  
Branding  
Project

MonDak  
Motorcycle  
Loop

In 2021 we provided assistance for  
**38** new and ongoing projects!



# Build our Business Community Through Training, Education and Technical Assistance

In 2021, EPEDC saw that many small businesses needed some additional guidance on how to successfully run their business following the COVID-19 pandemic. It is our goal to provide modern, accessible educational opportunities to provide more resources to local businesses and individuals to meet the challenges of our current business climate.

EPEDC staff hosted small business listening sessions to hear directly from business owners on their specific needs and how EPEDC can respond quickly to those needs. We hosted 11 different trainings throughout the five counties and via Zoom. Many of these trainings were co-hosted with other community partners and showed just how important collaboration is for small business success.

We had over **200** people participate in trainings!

- E-commerce
- Social Media
- Google Training
- Nonprofit Board Governance
- Next Gen Leadership
- Local Meat Marketing and Processing
- Co-ops 101
- Opportunity Co-ops
- Business 101
- Excel Training
- Growth Through Agriculture



# Build our Business Community Through Training, Education and Technical Assistance

EPEDC provides free and confidential counseling regarding all aspects of business start-up and business expansion, including planning and troubleshooting. Providing Technical Assistance to businesses and nonprofits is a big part of what we do. In 2021, we assisted **146** businesses and nonprofits.

Carter County 7	Dawson County 65	Fallon County 45
Prairie County 10	Wibaux County 11	Out of Region 8

Businesses/nonprofits assisted per county

The EPEDC has access to Revolving Loan Funds (RLF) designed to help established businesses keep and create jobs. The RLF program offers qualifying small businesses low, fixed interest rate loans with flexible payment options. To secure an RLF loan, the borrower must pledge available assets, including guaranties of the principals, after a confidential review of their comprehensive business plan has been done.

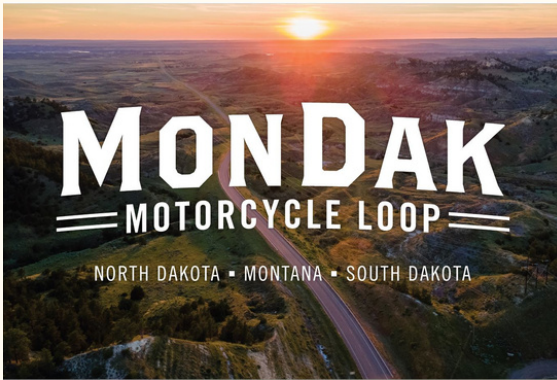




# Award Winning Projects

At the Montana Economic Developers Association (MEDA) Fall Conference, EPEDC received FOUR Impact Awards for our work.

**MonDak Motorcycle Loop** is a targeted marketing campaign designed to bring motorcycle tourism into eastern Montana through focused digital advertising and maps of the region.



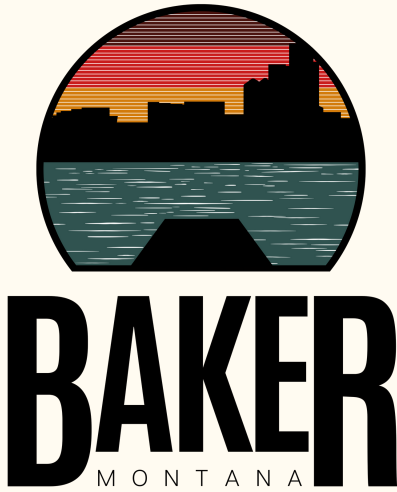
# Award Winning Projects

**Uran Center Community Collaboration** brought together multiple organizations and businesses to redevelop the old Kmart Building in Glendive into a thriving hub of health, wellness and education.



# Award Winning Projects

**Baker Branding Project** created a new brand and logo, complete with design standards to expand marketing the Baker community. This project was inspired by conversations at the Reimagining Rural Virtual Gatherings. The funding from Reimagining Rural and a TC Energy grant allowed the Branding Committee to purchase downtown banners and sample merchandise that is now being sold in local businesses.



# Award Winning Projects

Carter County constructed a new state-of-the-art critical access hospital in Ekalaka for the **Dahl Memorial Healthcare Association Facility**. EPEDC secured \$600,000 of CDBG Economic Development funding to purchase essential equipment including ER and clinic equipment, and the Nurse Call System.



Thank You!

