

PRESENTING
THE MISSOULA
BEST
PLACE
PROJECT





I believe Missoula needs a single, focused organization to guide the recruitment, retention and development effort, much in the way communities large and small around the country have done with success. That organization is the Missoula Economic Partnership.

Missoula's peerless natural and built environments, its vibrant downtown district, its first-class public teaching and research university, its world-class medical centers, and active, intelligent, engaged citizenry combine to create the best place to do business in the western United States.

Because we are such an attractive place to live, work, play and raise our families, we must recruit and support businesses that complement the place and add value.

Missoula needs to tell its story to bring new business to Missoula, to help existing business grow and prosper, and to create new opportunities for businesses through development and redevelopment. With meaningful resources, the Partnership can tell that story over and over.

I can't tell you that economic development is someone else's job anymore. It's mine. It's yours. It's ours.

This partnership relies on us working together in new ways. And as you'll see elsewhere in this brochure, we've got some great folks on the team who agree.

The goals spelled out in this brochure are simple but powerful. We want to put people to work. Your support is critical. Thanks for considering the Best Place Project and the Missoula Economic Partnership.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Engen".

John Engen
Mayor



**Here's what I hear more than anything from the folks I serve:
We live in the best place. I agree.**

And that's why we launched the Best Place Project. We want to ensure that the economic vitality of our extraordinary place is not left to chance. While Missoula is host to a number of economic development and business organizations that meet niche needs in the community and region, no single organization effectively drives the effort to recruit business, retain businesses, and develop opportunities for businesses in Missoula.

John Engen
- Mayor

A Proactive, Productive Plan for Greater Missoula

The five-year Best Place Project is a \$3.2 million regional economic growth plan targeted at the enormous pent-up opportunity represented by Missoula and Missoula County. An unparalleled quality of life, state-of-the-art healthcare, quality schools, a stable and diverse economy, and a growing population are only the beginning attributes that make this area an ideal place to live, work and raise a family. With these significant advantages, the potential for economic growth and prosperity is great.

The focus of the Best Place Project is on smart, managed and sustainable growth through 21st Century jobs and industries that fit our community.

To successfully compete with other regions across the country and the world, the Project helps pool our resources. It calls for increased assistance to existing business, aggressive recruitment of new business to our region, provides for regional marketing along with small business and entrepreneurship support.

The Best Place Project Goals:

- Create 2,500 new primary jobs resulting in 4,875 total jobs, paying a sustainable wage rate of \$37K annually
- Generate direct payroll totaling \$172,975,000 annually from new or expanding businesses in targeted sectors
- Increase new capital investments by \$150,000,000
- Encourage 25 new business startups with innovative or tech-related concepts
- Recruit 25 “best-fit” companies to relocate to Missoula
- Conduct 4–6 annual business-prospect missions and trade events to educate and attract national, statewide and regional site selection consultants and targeted prospects seeking business opportunities.

Mike & Jan Peissig
- Gateway Printing

“One word sums up
the Missoula business
environment: Ingenuity.

As a printer, we are usually
one of the first services
needed by a new business.
They come to us equipped
with only a dream. We’ve
seen many businesses
grow, develop and create
prosperity that benefits
everyone. We continue
to be inspired by what
small business can
accomplish and see
it every day here in
Missoula. Small business
is the true backbone
of America.”



Funding the Best Place Project

To effectively implement the Best Place Project and achieve the anticipated return on investment, it will require a budget of \$3.2 million. Five-year financial commitments to the Project will be sought from both private and public sectors.

Funds generated will be earmarked exclusively for the implementation of the various efforts outlined in the Project – as outlined on the following pages.

Strategy 1 :

Support Growth of Existing Businesses

Five-year Budget:
\$1 million

In order to provide superior service to, and promote the growth of, existing Missoula businesses, Project leadership will serve as a “single point of contact” for the community of business support providers.

This is a critical component of the Project as existing businesses create 80% of new jobs across the nation.

Planned tactics/strategies include:

- Conduct annual visits with businesses to learn how best to support their growth strategies. A team of business support providers (key government entities, utilities, financial institutions, education/training agencies, and others) will assist and respond quickly and directly to companies with specific problems or expansion opportunities.
- Provide ongoing access to local, state and national assistance and incentive programs with a goal of providing direct support to a minimum 50 businesses each year.
- Identify and enlist partners and government agencies to resolve general local/regional issues that may be limiting existing business growth.
- Visit at least one out-of-town regional or corporate headquarters of a local business each year.
- Plan events for Industry Appreciation Week to showcase and honor business excellence.
- Develop additional support materials to attract talent to the region including the relocation of professionals with local roots.
- Increase the level of business community engagement with Missoula County Public Schools and other education programs.
- Gather together key business and manufacturing groups to identify common obstacles and opportunities, such as recognizing supplier gaps, enhancing the area’s business-to-business contacts, evaluating co-op purchasing opportunities, and encouraging other collaborative efforts.
- Develop ongoing programs to help companies identify and access regional, national and global new market opportunities. Help identify and provide access to quality suppliers and vendors, along with adopting cost-effective “green” initiatives.
- Work closely with local manufacturing managers in developing an ongoing corporate headquarters contact program to promote the greater Missoula area as an attractive place for new contract placement and investment.

Strategy 2 :

Increase Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Small Business Support

Five-year Budget:
\$800,000

This part of the Best Place Project is designed to foster the success of Missoula area entrepreneurs. High-growth technology and knowledge-based businesses that generate export revenues will be targeted specifically.

The Project leadership and institutional partners will continue to connect entrepreneurs with necessary assets in order to remove barriers to growth, drive up revenues, and increase employment opportunities for all residents.

Planned tactics/ strategies include:

- Enhance existing program and develop new ones to improve our area's overall innovation/entrepreneurship climate and to provide specific opportunities targeted to small business, entrepreneurs and specific business sectors. Host four regional entrepreneurial events annually.
- Deepen the existing relationship with the University of Montana Tech Transfer office and their degree programs which support the development of entrepreneurs. Partner with UM to develop a basic "innovation and entrepreneurial" program to teach students how to create, develop and capitalize new products and service ideas. Grow the program to include local public and private high schools.
- Evaluate innovation and technology opportunities, including alternative energy and "green" initiatives that best fit the Missoula area. Develop programs to connect existing companies and start-ups to these opportunities.

- Implement a program for "Stage 2" entrepreneurs (companies with \$1-25 million in revenue) with the potential for significant growth. Provide assistance to four Stage 2 companies through resources, information and connections necessary to realize their growth.
- Expand funding opportunities for entrepreneurs by developing venture capital "angel" networks.
- Expand and enhance existing idea evaluation ("pitch night") programs that connect entrepreneurs to successful business people who then offer guidance on development of new businesses around those ideas.



Brad & Wendy Reid
– Diversified Plastics

"We are a second-generation family business in Missoula."

We appreciate raising our family in a close-knit community. Our kids benefit by attending smaller schools like when we were growing up. Our customers always comment about wanting to visit Montana and enjoy the beauty that's all around us. It's fulfilling to realize that we're able to own a business, raise a family, and enjoy life in a place where so many other people want to vacation."

Alex Philp, Ph.D.,
President and CEO
– GCS Holdings, Inc.

“I was drawn to Missoula by the blend of aesthetics, its size and the friendliness of the people. Missoula has become an ideal place to raise a family. With its mix of old and new, Missoula offers a pace and a lifestyle that supports the creative thinking my company needs. We can live and work in the mountains, surrounded by rivers. Life is relaxed here, allowing more time and energy for innovation.”



Strategy 3 :

Attract New Businesses to Enhance and Diversify the Local Economic Base

Five-year Budget:
\$1.2 million

The greater Missoula area has many assets that make it attractive to a diverse range of businesses. Our key assets include:

- Access to a quality workforce at competitive wages
- An existing industry base including medical and healthcare services
- Highly desirable geographic location and quality of life
- Smart-growth goals supported by the community
- Impressive infrastructure capacities
- The University of Montana
- The Missoula International Airport, and more.

Targeting “Best Fit” Industries:

The focus of this part of the Best Place Project is to educate and recruit new businesses to the city of Missoula and Missoula County with an emphasis on targeted industry segments that would especially prosper in the local environment.

Planned tactics/strategies include:

- Create a leading-edge website to be the region’s virtual “front door.” The site will feature a regional database with corporate data and listings, targeted industry job posts, a regional “newswire,” and a public information portal.
- Initiate proactive personal contact with targeted prospects by attending and sponsoring events at select trade shows and conferences, and hosting target groups within our region for symposiums and trade events.
- Obtain non-paid national and international media exposure by using news and feature material about Missoula County to generate positive coverage.

- Build partnerships with other organizations to maximize use of our community’s business development resources.
- Conduct multiple annual business prospecting missions and trade events to reach site consultants. Involve volunteer business and professional leaders, elected officials, and academic leaders on strategy and recruiting missions to target-rich environments.
- Host annual inbound recruitment mission for business site decision-makers with top-level investors included in each event.
- Create fresh, breakthrough marketing materials accompanied by accurate, current economic data with our distinctive Missoula area style. Use these to respond to inquiries and for distribution at trade shows and other events.
- Implement a marketing strategy designed to attract targeted firms, site selection specialists, and corporate real estate executives.

Strategy 4 :

Investor Relations & Communications

Five-year Budget:
\$200,000

Maintaining high levels of investor confidence in the Best Place Project will require the highest level of transparency, rapid and accurate communications, and complete accountability. It will also mean that Missoula's "first team" of business and elected leaders will need to take an active role in keeping the Project on task, on time, and on budget.

Specific oversight responsibilities will fall on a steering committee whose membership will evolve more fully as funds are committed. The steering committee will be comprised of individuals whose financial investment is clear testimony of their commitment to the program's success.

Planned tactics/ strategies include:

- Hire the professional staff necessary to implement the Project. Hold staff and implementing partners accountable for executing the strategies and achieving measurable results.
- Keep Project efforts fresh and responsive to market changes and opportunities during its five-year life span.
- Create a governing board consisting of financial investors in the Project (public and private) who will oversee the distribution of funds, development of organizational policies and practices, establishment of sound financial practices, and the hiring of qualified personnel.
- Keep all investors "in the loop" and provide meaningful and attractive opportunities for participation for all levels of investors.
- Remain accountable to investors by generating meaningful updates on economic impacts achieved and also on measurable returns on investment.
- Perform annual benchmarking to measure the Project's productivity and effectiveness, produce special events, orientations, regular periodic reports, and an informative series of newsletters.

Suresh K. Daniel, CEO
– Rocky Mountain Biologicals, Inc.

"As a father and an avid fisherman, I find Missoula to be a perfect fit for raising my family as well as pursuing my love of fly fishing. As a business owner, I can say without question that Rocky Mountain Biologicals has been built with Missoula resources and sustained by its people. The well-educated local workforce continues to make it possible for our company to put down roots in this unique setting."

Joan Mandeville, CEO
– Blackfoot Telecommunications

"I was attracted to Missoula by its size and location. It's large enough to have a workforce highly skilled in data networking, software development, and other specialties. Having the University of Montana and the College of Technology here contributes to the excellent quality of employees. We can hire locally or attract talent from out of the area. People want to live in Missoula. Once here, they want to stay, so employee turnover is low."



Five-year Funding Proposed Summary
Best Place Project Funding

Economic Impact Analysis

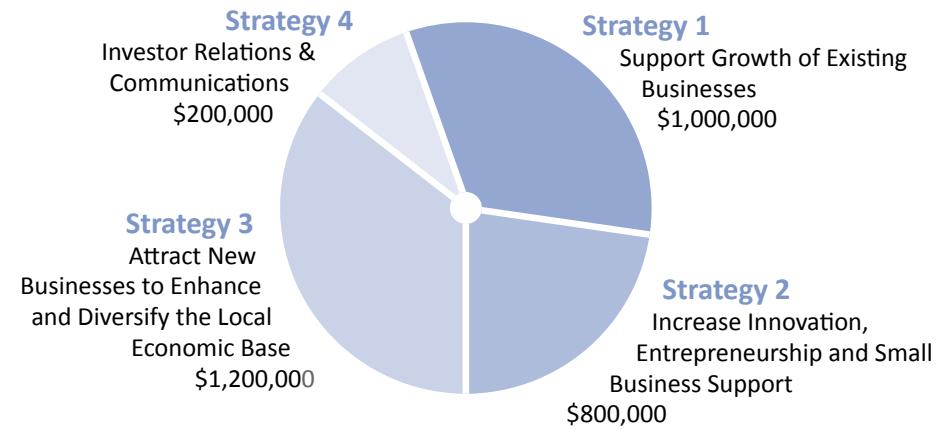
The economic impact analysis quantifies the extent to which attraction and expansion activities included in the proposed Best Place Project will stimulate economic effects, generate employment, income and business activity. The report shows the total economic impact, direct and indirect, measured in terms of jobs and income. These impacts have been calculated through an input-output economic model customized to reflect Missoula County's economy.

Economic Impact of Jobs

METRICS	DIRECT IMPACT	INDIRECT IMPACT	INDUCED IMPACT	TOTAL IMPACT
Jobs	2,500	1,386	1,134	4,875
Earnings (Payroll)	\$92,500,000	\$88,069,120	\$47,184,640	\$172,975,000

Disposable Personal Income	\$150,488,250
Net Personal Consumption Expenditures	\$124,905,248
Deposit Potential For Area Financial Institutions	\$60,195,300

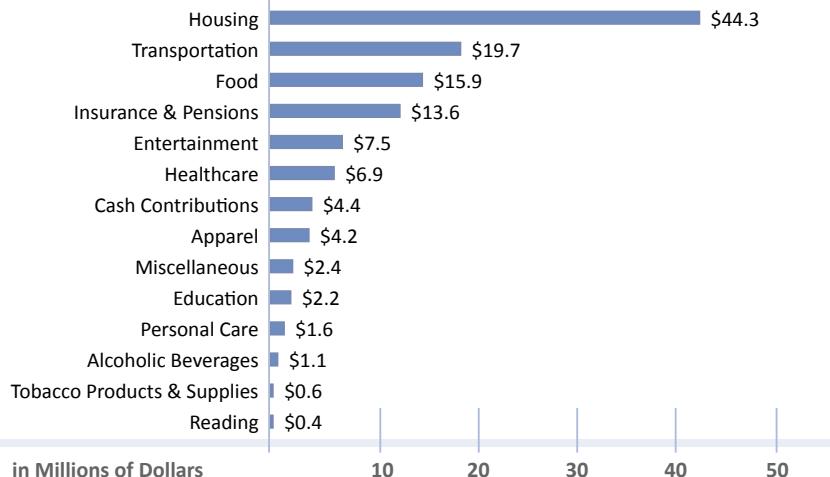
Analysis provided by Economic Strategy Center, the research and analysis division of NCDS, Inc.



The Project targets the creation of 2,500 new primary jobs. The ripple effect of these new jobs has been computed based on regional multipliers. These multipliers show the effect of the addition of one job or one dollar in any given industry to the employment and earnings for all industries.

The value of any job to the region's economy varies by industry, of course. Jobs based on significant capital investment have a higher wage rate and generate a greater ripple effect throughout the region's economy. Less capital-related jobs generate a smaller economic value. These jobs occur in retail, services and some of the lower-skilled manufacturing industries. Lower salary levels typically correspond with these categories of employment.

Expenditure Distribution in Missoula County, MT



Your Part in the Best Place Project

Through your investment and support of the Best Place Project, local businesses and governments will see a measurable return on their dollars while helping to improve the economic outlook and quality of life for everyone who calls Missoula County home.

As is the case with any successful economic development effort, job creation is at the core of the Best Place Project. By creating 2,500 new primary jobs in the city of Missoula and Missoula County, the Project will serve as the catalyst to stimulate existing business growth, spearhead community improvements, and build the strong relationships that exist within our business community.

The only question is – how big a role will you play in the success of the Best Place Project?



Design: Spiker Communications
 Photography: Bryant Photographics
 Printing: Gateway Printing

Campaign Co-chairs
 Join us today in moving Missoula forward.



Dirk Visser, CEO
 – Allegiance
 Benefit Plan Management



Jeff Fee, President and CEO
 – St. Patrick Hospital and
 Health Sciences Center



Stacey Mueller, Publisher
 – Missoulian



Scott Burke, President and CEO
 – First Security Bank



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