

N O R T H  
**Dakota** Be Legendary.<sup>TM</sup>

**2020 PARTNERS IN PLANNING GRANT PROGRAM**

**Purpose:** The Main Street Initiative (MSI) Partners in Planning (PiP) grant program supports non-profit organizations and/or local governments in completing a comprehensive plan or economic development/diversification strategic plan.

**Mission:** The Department of Commerce leads the efforts to attract, retain and expand wealth and improve the quality of life for the people of North Dakota.

**Program Objective:** This grant program is intended to empower communities to proactively plan their futures, seek smart, efficient infrastructure development and offer a healthy, vibrant environment for residents, and visitors.

**Eligibility:** PiP will support two types of grants to non-profits and/or local governments in North Dakota:

1. **Comprehensive Plans** – intended to partially fund the creation of a new comprehensive plan, or for an update to an existing comprehensive plan that is more than five years old. This grant may also be used for a component plan related to an existing adopted comprehensive plan that is less than five years old. The plan must address at least one of the three pillars of Main Street Initiative: 21<sup>st</sup> Century workforce; smart, efficient infrastructure; and healthy, vibrant communities.

A comprehensive plan for the local government should be a guide to a community/political subdivision's physical, social, and economic development. Comprehensive plans are not meant to serve as land use regulations in themselves; instead, they provide a rational basis for local land use decisions with a long-term, strategic vision for future planning and political subdivision/community decisions.

**Eligible Entities** – local political subdivisions (city, school, park, EDC, local tribal entity) or non-profit organization applying on behalf of a local government if accompanied by a letter of support for the grant AND proposed planning activities.

2. **Economic Development/Diversification Strategic Plan** – intended to partially fund the creation of a new economic development plan or for a comprehensive update to an existing plan that is more than five years old for a community and/or region. Workforce must be addressed in the plan. An economic development plan may specifically address economic recovery due to impacts of the 2019-2020 Coronavirus pandemic.

An economic development plan should empower communities and political subdivisions to maintain a sense of place, become more resilient given economic challenges and opportunities, and can increase their overall community wellbeing. A strategic economic

development plan helps individuals and communities see where they want to go and make decisions on how to get there.

**Eligible Entities** – City, County, Economic Development organization (JDA, regional Councils, EDC, CVB) and local tribal entities

A community is eligible to apply for multiple rounds, contingent the current PiP project is completed, and Commerce has received all deliverables and activities outlined in the approved budget. Non-government entities must be registered with the North Dakota Secretary of State's office to be eligible to receive funding.

**Funding available:** PiP is funded with funds from the North Dakota Department of Commerce (Commerce) Momentum Fund. PiP will be available if sufficient funding is available in the Momentum Fund. Currently \$125,000 per year is available for the 2019-21 biennium. Seventy percent (70%) of the total available funds will be made available to the rural allocation (\$87,500) and the remaining funds to the urban allocation (\$37,500).

**Urban** shall be defined as any community or region served, based on the application, that exceeds a total population of 5,000 based on the most recent available Census data.

**Rural** shall be defined as any community or region served, based on the application, with a population of less than 5,000.

**Matching Requirements:** This grant requires a community match and all grant payments are made on a reimbursement basis. The source of matching dollars cannot be from other State of North Dakota funds.

Funds are available to pay for approved activities up to the percentage outlined in the metric chart of the activity budget. Match requirements vary by community – see chart below outlining match requirements.

Match funds are required to be recorded and submitted for approval at the time of reimbursement. Match funds can be allocated from any private or public source, although applications proposing a financial match will be scored more favorably. Pledges for future donations will not be considered part of a cash match.

Commerce will award grants that will only support one or both types of plans listed above. Funds will not be used for specific community events or for specific businesses.

Activities in the submitted budget must not have commenced prior to grant approval or submission of application for grant.

**2020-21 Timeline:** Grants may be awarded in multiple rounds. The timeline as follows:

**Round 1 - UPDATED**

- **OPEN** – January 29, 2020
- **CLOSE** – July 31, 2020
- **Award** announcement September 1, 2020

## **Round 2**

- **OPEN** – January 29, 2021
- **CLOSE** – February 17, 2021
- **Award** announcement February 23, 2021

**Project Timeline:** All Partners in Planning projects in Round 2 must be fully allocated by June 30, 2021.

### **The Main Street Initiative (MSI) Community Advantage**

|                        | Points on App. | Maximum Award | Minimum Award | Match Required                                    |
|------------------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| Community/Region       |                | \$22,500      | \$5,000       | <b>35% of amount requested - or up to \$7,875</b> |
| MSI Community          | +2 bonus       | \$25,000      | \$7,500       | <b>25% of amount requested- or up to \$5,625</b>  |
| MSI Champion Community | +5 bonus       | \$30,000      | \$7,500       | <b>20% of amount requested -or up to \$6,000</b>  |

An awarded community is limited to the total maximum grant award, per biennium.

**Granting Agency Involvement:** The Department of Commerce maintains the right to be involved in the activities awarded as a result of the grant.

1. **Collateral Material:** The Department of Commerce reserves the right for editorial comment on all aspects of the materials. At minimum, the following statement needs to be included in collateral materials produced with Partners in Planning funds: *"Produced in partnership with the North Dakota Department of Commerce."* We also request placement of the Commerce logo on materials or as a link on web sites.
2. **Partner Advertising:** The Department of Commerce reserves the right for editorial comment on all aspects of advertising materials.
3. **The Department of Commerce reserves the right to utilize outcomes, processes and best practices in marketing and community educ**

**What makes for a strong application?** Applications that indicate commitment and participation from city leadership as well as other local partners (school board, park board, JDA) will be scored favorably. The community need for financial assistance with a planning project as well as the need to update a local plan will be considered. Applicants proposing a regional or multi-community approach to an economic development plan may be scored favorably. Projects with well-developed budgets will also be scored favorably.

**Application Questions:** Please briefly address the following in a separate, typewritten document. Point total is 150.

- I. Description of community and organization (25 points)**
  - a. Please provide a clear, concise description of your community's vision for its future.
  - b. Please provide a clear, concise description of your organization and the role that it will play in the development and/or implementation of this plan.
  - c. Will you contract with an external organization or complete the project in-house? If yes, do you have that contractor engaged at this time?
- II. Community Involvement (20 points)**
  - a. Describe briefly how you plan to engage a diverse representation of your community in the planning process.
  - b. Describe how you intend to engage youth (21 and under) in a meaningful way during this process.
  - c. If applying for funding for an economic development or diversification strategy, do you plan to coordinate with any other nearby communities (i.e. use a regional approach when looking at economic development)? If yes, please explain.
- III. Project Budget and Timeline (10 points)**
  - a. Provide a detailed project budget highlighting sources of any matching funding (including in-kind resources).
  - b. Please provide a detailed project timeline, showing when, if funded, you anticipate the planning project would commence and be completed. Please include interim and major milestones in the planning process.
- IV. Existing Financial Resources (10 points)**
  - a. Does your community have the financial resources to fund this project without assistance from the Department of Commerce? Please explain where those funds will come from and if they are already approved for this project. If not approved, when will they be?
- V. Demonstration of Need (Up to 15 points)**
  - a. If your community has a current comprehensive or economic development/diversification plan (prepared or updated within the last five years):
    - i. Please explain what you are hoping to achieve by updating a community plan (10 points)
  - b. If your community does not have a current comprehensive or economic development/diversification plan:
    - i. Please explain what you are hoping to achieve by preparing a community plan (15 points)
- VI. Main Street Initiative (15 points)**
  - a. Is your community engaged in the Main Street Initiative?
    - i. No
    - ii. Yes – we are a Main Street Community (we have signed up, had a visit from the state, and have agreed to share updates)
    - iii. Yes – we are a Main Street Champion Community (we have done all of the above plus we have issued a formal Main Street Proclamation and submitted our Main Street Action Plan)

- b. Please describe how, if awarded, your community plan will incorporate the following elements:
  - i. Smart, efficient infrastructure development
  - ii. Healthy, vibrant community
  - iii. 21<sup>st</sup> Century workforce

**Supplemental Materials (50 points total for this section):**

1. **Main Street Initiative Engagement**
  - a. If your community is a Main Street Champion Community, along with your completed application please submit the following:
    - i. Signed Main Street Community Proclamation issued from the City Council/Commission
    - ii. Completed Main Street Action Plan
2. **Most recent community plan(s)**
  - a. Please submit or link to a copy of your community's most recent plan(s) (strategic, economic development, comprehensive, etc.)
3. **Letter of support from local organizations and/or political entities**
  - a. **Please provide a letter of support, indicating participation in the process and specifically referring to this grant application, from any of the following partners**
    - i. Local school district
    - ii. Local park and recreation district (or similar)
    - iii. JDA, chamber or other economic and/or community development organization
    - iv. City and/or County Commission/Council
  - b. Nonprofits that are applying on behalf of a city/political subdivision must have a letter of commitment for the application included to be considered for funding.

**Application Deadline:** Please ensure that you address each of the questions above in your application *on a separate document*. All application materials must be received at the Department of Commerce office no later than **5:00 pm CT**. Applications received after the deadline will not be considered by the review committee.

Funds must be allocated by June 30, 2021 for this granting cycle. If you are awarded a grant, the Commerce staff will work with you to assure all resources are utilized by the deadline.

*Mailing Address:*

North Dakota Department of Commerce  
Attn: Tammy Heick, Partners in Planning Grant  
1600 East Century Ave, Suite 2  
PO Box 2057  
Bismarck, ND 58503-2057

*To email your application:* Tammy Heick – theick@nd.govPlease include "Partners in Planning Grant Application" in the subject line of the email submission

*For more information:* Maria Effertz Hanson  
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