

April 12, 2017

Forward Great Falls Quarterly Investor Letter

To our valued Investors:

Through our weekly Top 10 and Quarter Index you know the details of progress our economic development partnership is making to grow and diversify the Great Falls regional economy and support the creation of higher wage jobs. As a key investor, you can take pride in projects under construction and new businesses opening across our community. And for you number crunchers, take heart in the \$161 million addition to annual disposable income we've added to our local economy in the last 3 years.

Two things I would like to announce first to you:

1. FCR has begun hiring the first group of employees for its new downtown Great Falls call center;
2. We have been selected to receive a 2017 Excellence in Regional Transportation Award from the National Association of Development Organizations for the Great Falls AgriTech Park.

This quarter, our mission priorities are to:

- 1) Help **move announced projects into construction or opening**, including major projects such as Town Pump's new hotel, Montana Specialty Mills' new plant, The Farran Groups' west side apartments, and the Rockcross Commons apartments;
- 2) Help **make new announcements happen**, working our pipeline of active business and real estate start-ups, expansions and attractions;
- 3) Continue to **pitch the Great Falls** region to targeted businesses and real estate developers;
- 4) And, get the data we need on underutilized and stay-at-home **workforce** to figure out what we can do to help solve your workforce needs.

Our organizational priorities are to:

- 1) Put our existing loan capital and AgriTech Park assets to work to enable more projects to happen;
- 2) Secure new resources so we can continue and expand our economic development efforts;
- 3) Take care of some updates to our internal operations to remain in compliance with ever-changing federal regulatory requirements and continue to increase our team's productivity;

- 4) And, engage you in strategic planning as we update our priorities for putting your investment dollars to work in the next few years ~~top-to~~ insure maximum impact.

Business development efforts to pitch Great Falls will continue at a high pace. This quarter we will be meeting with manufacturing leaders and exhibiting at the national **SelectUSA** foreign direct investment summit in Washington, DC, and networking with targeted companies, consultants and brokers at the **RECON** commercial real estate event and the **Food EXPO** in Las Vegas. Locally, we will continue business retention/expansion visits with primary sector companies, participating in the **Montana Ag Summit** that Sen. Daines has organized in Great Falls, and host the Montana Economic Developers Conference in Great Falls.

We are also mounting a special trip to **Boise May 8-10** to meet with developers, businesses and community leaders, hosted by Larry Leasure of White-Leasure Development. CTA is organizing a networking reception for us with the Boise real estate community. We'll stop in Idaho Falls and Twin Falls to explore their successes in attracting private sector investment.

We've commissioned two workforce-related studies to help us step-up efforts to address this critical challenge to continued economic growth. The household labor survey will delve into why our labor force participation rate has been running behind the state and national average, and see what underutilized workforce skills exist in our labor market. The population growth impact report will detail industry-by-industry economic impact if we can start growing our population.

Please mark you calendar for June 29, 11:30 AM for our Annual Meeting.

If there is anything we can do to help your company, please do not hesitate to contact me.



*Brett Doney
President & CEO*

If your company or organization hasn't yet joined the Forward Great Falls team, or if you are ready to increase your investment in the future of the Great Falls region, contact me at 1-406-750-2119 or BDoney@GFdevelopment.org today.

Enclosed: Great Falls Growth Highlights
GFDA 1st Quarter 2017 Index
Forward Great Falls Investor Honor Roll

Results Matter.

See how we help companies like yours to succeed.