



2021 Business Development Plan

Approved 3/4/21

Business development efforts fill the pipeline of clients with high priority leads for economic growth across the Golden Triangle. Results Matter. Each year we update our Business Development Plan so that we best utilize our limited time and cash resources to generate high priority leads, projects, and results. Our priority is to have the right message to the right people at the right time.

Our first focus is always on adding value to our active high priority client pipeline, fulfilling commitments, earning a high client satisfaction rating, and making things happen that otherwise would not. We do not take credit for client achievements, rather we rely on clients to assess the value we bring to make their success possible.

GFDA is a regional public/private economic development partnership. Partnerships are key to our success and to our ability to bring value to our clients. Maintaining, strengthening and expanding our partnership network is an important part of our business development efforts.

Market Research

- Utilize organization membership/affiliations to build relationships, referral sources, and gain access to member databases.
- When possible, attend three targeted industry events (same three events as under relationship building) to strengthen relationships with clients, targets, identify new targets, track market conditions, and identify new targets.
- Monitor and subscribe to targeted industry publications and online media to gain industry understanding and identify new targets.
- Identify developers and businesses in other communities that we want in the Great Falls region to add to target lists.

Competitive Assessment

- If grant funding secured, retain consultant to conduct new target industry assessment.
- If grant funding secured, retain consultant to conduct health care Med District opportunity assessment.
- If grant funding secured, retain consultant to conduct food, ag and bio-processing supply chain opportunity analysis.
- If grant funding secured, commission homeownership development opportunity market study.
- If grant funding is secured, commission feasibility study of creating a food and agricultural processing development center in Great Falls in partnership with MSU.
- If college intern is secured, develop Canadian soft-landing content.
- Conduct virtual or in-person visits with other communities to learn best practices; involve investors and partners.

Earned Media and Advertising

Use content across platforms including our website, social media, earned media, eblasts, and advertising.

- Use earned media (stories and articles) to celebrate client successes, build awareness of available tools/services, and generate new leads from in and out of market sources.
- Continue to build relationship with print, TV, online, and radio news media to increase effective earned media.
- Targeted in-market advertising, including Small Business Administration (SBA) Resource Guide back-cover 504 ad, Livability Great Falls magazine, and Great Falls Area Chamber map.

Digital Marketing

- Develop 2.0 version of GFDA website and continue to expand followers on social media platforms.
- Develop High Plains Financial website.
- Continue production of professional and in-house video content to increase effectiveness of digital marketing.
- Continuous communication with stakeholders: weekly Top Ten, quarter index, primary sector growth highlights, and quarterly investor letter.
- Engage team, clients, and partners to create and distribute compelling, useful content for target audiences to generate high value leads; develop new lures to drive high priority lead generation.
- Grow our targeted eblast lists and expand followers on social media for wider distribution of content.
- Continue to increase social media advertising to both in/out of market targets; in-market targeting of lower-served geographies and populations.
- Send Quarterly Target Industry Eblasts.
- Send Quarterly Site Selector Eblasts.
- Launch consultant-assisted SBA 504 account-based marketing campaign statewide.
- As deemed effective, supplement targeted digital marketing with direct mail postcards and physical token gift inventory.
- Continue to expand photography, testimonial and ranking archives.
- Update PDF flyers; including for targeted industries, downtown, Menu of Services, and AgriTech Park.

GFDA Events

Host GFDA events to generate high priority leads:

- Ignite 2020
- The Fire Within
- Invest Downtown
- SelectUSA Virtual Tour: Select Great Falls Montana FDI Event
- Golden Triangle Pitch Nights
- Pitch events targeting specific strategic priorities.
- Monthly Development Coffees
- Announcements, groundbreakings, and grand opening events in partnership with clients.
- Recruiting, Developing, Engaging and Retaining Your Workforce Series

- Engage Barbara Wold in additional 1:1 consultations: Increasing your customers and sales.
- Seek speaking engagements in targeted third-party events.

Use all GFDA trainings, roundtables and meetings to generate additional high priority leads.

Relationship Building

Activities to build relationships with existing businesses, targets, and referral sources.

- Continue to improve team use of Salesforce CRM.

Business Retention/Expansion

- Conduct 150 business retention and expansion visits with existing businesses focusing on primary sector companies across Golden Triangle.
- Identify and build relationships with developers, property owners, and primary sector businesses located in the Downtown Master Plan District.

Business Attraction

- Continue consultant-assisted account-based marketing lead generation campaign.
- Identify, meet, and establish on-going relevant communications with targets in our strategic sectors, including large-scale homeownership developers.
- Attend three targeted industry events when possible.
- Exhibit Virtually at Select USA in Washington DC.
- Build relationships with Trans-Atlantic Business Investment Council (TBIC) and US Commercial Service agents to cultivate foreign direct investment.
- Conduct four business development trips to meet with target companies, site selectors, referral sources, and also when appropriate existing business headquarters, when possible.
- Conduct virtual, personalized site visits for target companies and site selectors.
- Strengthen relationship with Lethbridge Economic Development for cross-border partnership.
- Develop relationships with the new state staff across departments.

Site Selection Consultants

- Attend three site selector events when possible.
- Partner with other Montana Economic Development Organizations (EDOs) to host site selector lunches in cities with large site selector presence (i.e. Atlanta, Dallas, etc.) when possible and virtual briefings.

AgriTech Park

- Engage a national industrial broker to list lots.
- Continue to engage with Loopnet, OppSites, and Quantum Listing to market Park.
- Signage in the AgriTech Park.

Memberships, Partnerships, and Alliances

Maintain memberships, partnerships, and alliances in targeted trade organizations and clubs, utilizing membership as market research, referral development, and lead generation.

Trade Area

- Downtown Great Falls Association
- Downtown Business Improvement District

- Great Falls Area Chamber of Commerce and Military Affairs Committee
- Great Falls Rotary Club
- Meadowlark Country Club
- All Chambers of Commerce across Golden Triangle
- Downtown Development Partnership
- Great Falls Chamber GTF Air Service
- Great Falls Tourism
- Montana Defense Alliance

Montana

- Montana Bankers Association
- Montana Chamber of Commerce and Manufacturing Council
- Montana Farm Bureau Federation
- Montana Farmers Union
- Montana Grain Growers Association
- Montana High Tech Business Alliance
- Montana Manufacturing Extension Center (MMEC)
- Montana Organics Association
- Montana Petroleum Association
- Montana Renewable Energy Association
- Montana Stock Growers Association

Target Industries

- American Association of Cereal Chemists (AACC)
- American Oil Chemists Society (AOCS)
- CompTIA Information Technology (IT) Industry and Association
- CoreNet Global
- Institute of Food Technologists (IFT)
- International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC)
- Northern Pulse Growers Association
- Urban Land Institute