

Volume

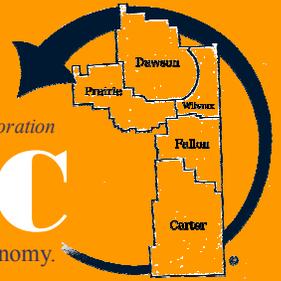
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August 17, 2010

Eastern Plains Economic Development Corporation

**EPEDC**

... providing support for a better economy.



## HOUSING

EPEDC Assistant Elizabeth Smith traveled to the Montana Housing Partnership Conference held in Helena this June. The theme for the conference was “Visitability”—i.e. making homes handicap accessible. Funding sources for housing projects, in addition to a number of other topics, were also discussed. An independent regional housing conference is now scheduled for Tuesday, October 26<sup>th</sup> in Glendive, MT. A location and times for the conference will be announced shortly. If you are interested in attending, please call Elizabeth at 406-853-3840 or EPEDC Executive Director Jason Rittal.

## Next EPEDC Quarterly Board Meeting

November 3, 2010

Wibaux, MT

at the Wibaux County Courthouse  
9:30 AM

## Contact Information

Comments or questions?

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EPEDC

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## Local Project Updates

The N. Baker Water and Sewer Project is well underway with general contractor, Ahanu Construction, Inc. of Billings, utilizing multiple crews to complete the project as efficiently as possible (*pictured above are workers breaking ground in Baker*). Although the contract provisions allow for a winter shutdown and a summer of 2011 finish, Ahanu has expressed its intent to finish the project late this fall. This schedule has its challenges, but the benefits of finishing early make all extra efforts worthwhile. The water and sewer district has advertised its intent to implement a rate increase needed to meet grant requirements, maintain adequate cash flow, and cover the cost of a new connection to the established city sewer.

An application to USDA Rural Development was submitted and approved on behalf of the Town of Ekalaka to provide \$17,900 in funding for a new road maintenance pickup. The pickup was then ordered and paid for.

The Evelyn Cameron Heritage, Inc. board is actively seeking funds which will aid them in transforming the historic Rialto Theater, located near the Yellowstone Trail in downtown Terry, into the much-anticipated *Evelyn Cameron Cultural Center*. The EPEDC assisted the organization by writing and submitting several grants for them over the last few months. The first of which was approved for \$2,000 from the Caviar Grant program in Glendive earlier this summer. The grant will help purchase materials to stabilize the facility's basement and will hopefully leverage matching dollars through the State of MT Tourism Infrastructure Investment Program (TIIP) to be utilized on the building's main floor. A grant application was also submitted to PPL Montana that would provide for further main floor renovations.

Additionally, the EPEDC helped the Prairie County Museum in Terry submit a TIIP grant to fund rehabilitation that would improve the structural integrity of the façades on the campus' main buildings. TIIP funding would improve wiring in the Evelyn Cameron Gallery as well. Awards for both TIIP and PPL grants will be announced in September and/or October.

Moreover, the EPEDC has been awarded funding from the Federal Economic Development Association (EDA) to continue its development efforts in our five counties. The grant award for the current fiscal year is \$60,000

and will be utilized to cover operational expenses related to staffing, travel, etc. The EDC leverages these funds with State of MT Certified Regional Development Corporation monies and local government contributions. This is the first year of a three year award period, with years two and three added if funding is available and the EDC is meeting expectations. Every third year—this year serving as the end to our first grant cycle—the EPEDC must submit a full application for funding. Our hope is to use momentum gained over the past couple of years and build upon our organization's ability to complete projects which will provide tangible results for the region.

## Brownfield RLF: Nearing Readiness

Eastern Plains EDC, Great Northern Development Corporation, and Southeastern Montana Development Corporation continue to work through the planning necessary to implement use of the \$1.5 million in revolving loan funds received via application to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Several logistical items must be submitted and approved prior to allowing any of the Districts to proceed with actual projects in counties covered by one of the three EDD regions. EPA is holding a training conference in Missoula during September, and all three District directors plan to attend. This training will hopefully bring us one step closer to making the funds available.

For those of you who don't know, Brownfields are real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant. Cleaning up and reinvesting in these properties protects the environment, reduces blight, and takes development pressures off green spaces and working lands.

If anyone located in a county within one of the Districts has an idea for a Brownfield project, please drop a note to [jrittal@midrivers.com](mailto:jrittal@midrivers.com), and we'll get in touch with you as the process moves forward.

**"We're trying to do good. And we are trying to make money. The more money we make, the more good we can do."**

-John Makey  
Whole Foods Market, CEO

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local project updates  
research and development  
housing spotlight  
quote of the quarter

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**The EPEDC serves the following participating counties and municipalities:  
Carter County, Dawson County, Fallon County, Prairie County, and Wibaux County,  
as well as the City of Baker, the Town of Ekalaka, the City of Glendive, the Town of Plevna,  
the Town of Richey, the Town of Terry, and the Town of Wibaux.**