Making Connections for Fargo Moorhead

Facilitating, Collaborating, Connecting. It’s How We Do Business.

We call it “Open Source” economic development, and it’s what we do every single day to support our primary-sector companies, entice new ones to our community, build our workforce and strengthen our entrepreneurial infrastructure.

Open Source economic development is the basic element of how we perceive and interact with our community, state and region, and how we are perceived. In basic terms, it’s working together to make things happen, and that’s nothing new to our region or our community.

The bigger picture is a dynamic community with a strong, diverse sector base that’s constantly improving, a business-friendly environment and an exceptional quality of life. It’s a picture of growth that translates into higher incomes and a larger tax base.

Open Source economic development. For Greater Fargo Moorhead, it’s the smartest move we can make.

Sincerely,
Brad Schlossman, Chair
GFMEDC Board of Directors

The mission of the Greater Fargo Moorhead EDC is to grow and diversify the economies in Cass County, N.D. and Clay County, Minn. communities by attracting, retaining and expanding primary-sector businesses.

Brad Schlossman and Jim Gartin

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1. Strengthen the organization and establish the “Open Source” concept.
2. Reach out to primary-sector businesses and investors.
3. Connect with educational partners from pre-K to K-12 to higher education.
4. Collaborate with municipalities, government agencies, non-profits and other economic development organizations.
5. Connect with organizations to build the entrepreneurial ecosystem and support workforce development.

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Smart Move-Making Connections

Brad Schlossman and Jim Gartin

Making Connections

Fargo Moorhead

Community Vision

- A growing, dynamic community that participates in the nation’s growth sectors, competes nationally with a new and higher level of cities, and provides quality opportunities for all citizens.
- A global destination for embedded systems/ smart technologies and biotechnology.
- A community that
  - Encourages and supports entrepreneurs.
  - Is on the nation’s technology infrastructure map.
  - Leads our nation in math and science education reform.
  - Has globally competitive air service.

We collaborate, and that’s the smartest move we can make for the Fargo Moorhead Metro. And because we do, we are successful in creating a more vibrant economy that enables all of us to thrive and prosper.

From an service to business-friendly legislation, workforce development to entrepreneurial support, we’re putting all the pieces in place. We are connecting our community with workers and students from other cities and regions, facilitating relationships between business and education leaders, and helping our companies create links between their businesses and customers around the world.

In its simplest form, Open Source economic development is like a child’s connect-the-dots picture. You start with one dot, go on to another, then a third and so on until the connections become something larger and more powerful. The more connections you make, the clearer the picture becomes.

To connect the dots and create valuable relationships, the GFMEDC is working to:

1. Strengthen the organization and establish the “Open Source” concept.
2. Reach out to primary-sector businesses and investors.
3. Connect with educational partners from pre-K to K-12 to higher education.
4. Collaborate with municipalities, government agencies, non-profits and other economic development organizations.
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Online Presence

**WEBSITE**
We’re telling people how and why Greater Fargo Moorhead makes sense for them, their families and their businesses every day through our new website. It’s content-driven, easy to navigate and provides all the information businesses, people and site selectors need to make an informed decision about making the Smart Move themselves.

**SOCIAL MEDIA**
The world is connecting at unprecedented rates, and we’re in on it. Like us, follow us, check us out.

Community

Making Connections

The Fargo Moorhead Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) has a great story to tell – smart people, great companies and plenty of competitive advantages. In 2012, we went further than ever before in spreading the word about what we have to offer workers, students, families and businesses. We’ve done it by sharing the stories of people who have moved here and love it, telling their “Smart Move” stories and letting them tell ours.

Marketing

Advertising, public relations and other forms of marketing help boost Fargo Moorhead’s image outside of the community and help recruit businesses, families, workers and students.

The “Best. Days. Ever.” ad appeared in the annual Fargo Marathon insert in The Forum, which was provided to more than 24,000 runners.

Images Fargo-Moorhead magazine is a relocation and economic development guide that highlights health, education, arts and culture in Fargo-Moorhead. The GFMEDC publishes the magazine once a year and distributes it nationally.

MSN Health named North Dakota #11 on its list of the Healthiest States in America for 2012.

FACEBOOK: www.facebook.com/careerfm

TWITTER: @careerfm

BLOG: http://smartmovefargomoorhead.areavoices.com
COMMUNITY TOURS
Customized community tours help job candidates learn more about what our great community has to offer and connects them with people who are already living and working here. From schools to homes to grocery stores, a GFMEDC staff member drives the candidate around West Fargo, Fargo and Moorhead so they can see for themselves why residents love the metro.

TEACHERS IN INDUSTRY
For the second year, the GFMEDC and our partners connected teachers to industry professionals through a four-week summer internship. The teachers get a first-hand look at how companies do business, and the companies have a chance to help shape the educational foundation ensuring students develop the skills, like problem solving, they need to be successful in today’s ever-changing global environment.

“It’s been a great experience. At the beginning of the summer, I volunteered with the Desert View Robotics team, then I worked at the robotics district competition. It was fun to see kids who had never seen robotics before, and see how they reacted to it.”
— Eric Johnstone, 8th grade robotics team member at Horizon Middle School, Moorhead, Minn.

“It’s on the rise, and it’s become a very strong component of our science program. It’s a good way to ensure that kids are engaged in the science program.”
— Mike Geisler, 6th grade science teacher at Horizon Middle School, Moorhead, Minn.

“I have heard of 21st century skills before, but it took seeing them in action to truly understand why they are so important. They are needed to be successful in industry, and they are skills a successful employee needs, so we have to find a way to get them into the classroom.”
— Jacob Gunderson, 8th grade STEM teacher at Horizon Middle School, Moorhead, Minn., who completed an internship at John Deere Electronic Solutions

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MSUM President Edna Szymanski calls it a symbiotic relationship. It’s an ongoing series of meetings between the university and focused industry groups, coordinated with the GFMEDC’s help, and it has led to curriculum changes that will make MSUM’s students more competitive and better qualified to fill local positions.

By 2012, university officials were able to report results from the multi-year partnership. Based on the groups’ interactions with the university, MSUM is adapting and adding to its curriculum to provide graduates with skills identified by potential employers. They include soft skills, leadership skills, entrepreneurial skill development and enhanced upper class career development offerings. The university is also looking at certificates and degrees within various disciplines.

Specific initiatives include:

• Developing a Master of Science in Accounting and Finance, which is currently being reviewed by Minnesota Colleges and Universities. MSUM opened the program in spring 2013.

• Developing an executive MBA in the College of Business and Industry. MSUM plans to facilitate focus groups this summer and offer the first courses in the fall 2013.

• Hiring a new director of Career Development, who will enhance internship opportunities for students and increase students’ preparedness for internships and post-baccalaureate employment.

• Developing a campus-wide leadership program that will track students’ leadership experiences and assess how well those experiences match expected outcomes and employers’ needs.

• Hiring a full-time, tenure-track faculty member to teach leadership development.

• Sharing feedback gathered from sector breakfasts with other advisory groups in an effort to “triangulate” the data and develop consensus about industry needs and opportunities for industry-higher education partnerships.

The Fargo Moorhead Metropolitan Statistical Area ranked #12 on the “Top College Towns in the United States” list – American Institute for Economic Research (AIER)

Fargo ranks 20th among Best Cities for Job Growth – NewGeography.com

Fargo Ranks

$8.4 MILLION

The amount primary-sector companies have collected, using the GFMEDC as a pass-through organization, to acquire New Jobs Training dollars in the past 10 years.

1299

The number of jobs created in 2012.
**Making Connections**

The GFMEDC works to attract new businesses to the region, telling them the exciting story of Fargo Moorhead and sharing all the resources that can help them be successful here. We also link current businesses to resources that help them thrive and grow. Through one-on-one meetings with regional primary-sector companies, we learn what’s working and where companies are facing challenges. With that information, we can connect them with resources or work to build infrastructure that supports success. All these efforts stimulate job creation, and that’s the bottom line.

**Connecting to the World**

Air Service

Connecting our metro to the world is a critical part of the region's infrastructure. More airlines and additional flights are necessary for doing business in a global environment. The added non-stop flights make doing business easier and improve our quality of life. The GFMEDC partners with the Fargo Airport and other organizations to attract air service.

**Frontier Airlines**

Frontier Airlines re-entered the Fargo market with nonstop service between Fargo and Denver in November 2012.

**American Airlines**

American Airlines began providing non-stop service between Fargo and Dallas/Fort Worth in February 2013. The Fargo/Moorhead Airport Authority secured a $750,000 Small Community Air Service Development Grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation. That grant, along with contributions from the GFMEDC, the Convention and Visitors Bureau and the Fargo-Moorhead West Fargo Chamber of Commerce, helped secure American service to Dallas/Fort Worth.

**Business Expansions**

**GFMEDC FACILITATED**

**CMH**

CMH is a world leader in the agricultural and construction businesses. Supported by about 11,900 employees in approximately 172 countries, CMH brings together the knowledge and heritage of its Case and New Holland brands. For a century, the family-owned company has grown from a four-person, 170-square-foot shop opened by its founder in 1917. The most recent expansion added 10,000 square feet and facilitated the creation of 20 new jobs. In 2021, the facility employed approximately 1,100 people.

**Northern Plains Steel**

Northern Plains Steel Co., a division of Daimler Trucks North America, has had a Fargo location since 1975. It has grown from a 540,000-square-foot operation to its present size of 690,000 square feet. The most recent expansion added 10,000 square feet and facilitated the creation of 20 new jobs. The company plans to add approximately 86,000 square feet of manufacturing and warehouse space in Fargo to meet growing demand. The company has developed patented technology to significantly reduce the sodium in processed foods without affecting flavor. Nu-Tek has entered an agreement with Hitachi Consulting that will establish a technical development center in Fargo. From this center, which will initially employ 10 people, Hitachi will provide sourcing, program management, development, and testing services for the Microsoft Business Solution (MBS) IT organization. The center will be tasked to include additional Microsoft IT project management and business groups. Hitachi Consulting is also actively looking to develop new business and service offerings for other existing clients from this new facility.

**Horch Anderson**

Horch Anderson, a world manufacturer based in Andover, S.D., is building a new, 110,000-square-foot facility in the Mahtoos Industrial Park. Horch Anderson produces and distributes world-renowned Horch-branded products in North America, including premium agriculture seeding and tilling products. The company plans to add approximately 80 employees over the next few years.

**New Companies**

**GFMEDC ASSISTED**

**Tech Mahindra**

Tech Mahindra is a leading global consulting and IT services provider. The company currently has 10 employees in Fargo/Moorhead and expects to have 20 within 18 months. Tech Mahindra is part of the U.S.$ 15.4 billion Mahindra Group and is a leading global systems integrator and business transformation consulting organization, focused on the telecommunications industry. Tech Mahindra expanded its IT portfolio in 2020 by acquiring the leading global business and information technology services company, Mahindra Satyam (formerly known as Satyam Computer Services). Mahindra Group employs more than 155,000 people in over 100 countries across the globe.

**Nitex Food Science**

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**Hitachi Consulting**

Hitachi Consulting is a nearshore strategy, said Don Morton, Site Leader of the Microsoft Campus in Fargo. The relationship with Nu-Tek, a global supplier of sodium reduction technology services company, is poised to substantially increase the number of employees the company has on-site in Fargo. Hitachi Consulting is also looking to develop new business and service offerings for other existing clients from this new facility.

**Hitch**

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Making Connections > Innovations

Entrepreneurism is organic growth, and it’s the heart and soul of economic development. Innovators, their ideas and their inventions strengthen our regional economy by driving business and job growth. Their spirit is rooted in the Midwestern soil, where for decades hard-working, smart people have created useful tool after useful tool, successful company after successful company.

To ensure we are doing everything we can to help them flourish, the GFMEDC is evaluating current services to determine what is leading to success, to identify gaps, and to develop new resources to fill them. Our goal is to connect our bright folks to the educational, financial and networking resources and opportunities they need to turn brilliance into business.

Life Sciences Summit

> CONNECTING EXISTING LIFE SCIENCE ASSETS WITH THE FUTURE

Get the right equipment into the right hands and good things will happen. That was one idea that came out of the region’s first Life Sciences Summit, held at Microsoft in November 2012. The GFMEDC brought together leaders in the life sciences from higher education and industry to discuss current initiatives and opportunities for continued collaborations. One initiative is the creation of a centralized inventory of high-tech science equipment that exists in the community and is available for lease. The idea is to make the inventory accessible to companies and entrepreneurs, and use it to create new internship opportunities for life science students at our colleges and universities.

“The EDC catalyzed a meeting of bio-tech thought leaders, that promises to open new vistas for research-related economic development in the Valley.”

- Dr. Bruce Rafert, NDSU Provost

Startup Weekend

> CONNECTING FRESH IDEAS TO RESOURCES

A new app that enables instant feedback on customer service ran away with the win at the region’s first-ever Startup Weekend. The event, held in downtown Fargo March 8-10, was a sellout. Roughly 60 people whose goal was to learn the ins and outs of launching a successful business participated in the 54-hour entrepreneurial event, which brought together entrepreneurs, designers, developers and startup enthusiasts.

Eight teams presented their concepts and worked through the weekend to turn them into viable startups. The GFMEDC helped organize and was a sponsor of the event, which local CEOs, business founders and startup veterans provided expertise and spoke about their experiences in the fast-paced world of technology startups. The winning team created what it called Eathos, an app that allows restaurants to receive instant feedback on their customer service. Along with their bills, customers will receive a device allowing them to rate the customer service and provide additional comments. 

3.6% UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

FARGO-MOORHEAD VS 7.6% NATIONAL AVERAGE
Valley Prosperity Partnership

Business, higher ed leaders gather to shape Red River Valley’s economic future

Competing globally requires working regionally. A new collaboration is bringing together business leaders, economic development and higher education, to create a plan for economic development collaboration up and down the Red River Valley in North Dakota and Minnesota.

A $100,000 investment from William Marcil helped launch the Valley Prosperity Partnership. The initiative involves more than 20 businesses and higher education institutions, the GFMEDC and Grand Forks Regional EDC (GFREDC).

“Through this initiative, the Valley’s private sector will be building the roadmap for our region’s economic prosperity and identifying actions we can take to augment the resources of our great research universities,” Marcil said.

With the help of Wadley-Donovan, Growth Tech, a national consulting firm, the group will create a first-of-its-kind regional comprehensive strategic plan that tackles job creation, social infrastructure and regional economic needs. Benchmarks and measurements will be in place to ensure accountability.

Co-chairs are Tammy Miller, CEO at Border States Electric and member of the GFREDC Board, and Steve Burian, who is the president of AE2S and chair of the GFREDC Board.

“Our state’s economic landscape continues to grow and change, due in large part to booming oil and agriculture sectors,” Miller said. “For all areas to prosper and grow, Valley communities must be more collaborative and strategic in our planning.”

- Tammy Miller

Fargo made the list of "Best American Cities to Buy a House.”

New building permits up in 2012

USA Today writer Dennis Caufield calls North Dakota “The nation’s true economic miracle.”

Caroline Morse of Yahoo Travel ranks North Dakota #1 on her list of “10 Best Hidden Places” for travel.

Newscase/Daily Beast included locations that offer reasonably priced homes in economically viable communities.

Dan Witters of Gallup, in his article, “North Dakota and Minnesota make the top five in Best U.S. States to Live in,” ranked Minnesota #2 and North Dakota #5 in the “Best States to Live in the Future” category.
Our investors make it possible

Primary-sector, retail and service-oriented businesses in Greater Fargo Moorhead provide approximately 45 percent of our funding. We are able to fulfill our mission thanks to support from the following organizations.

**ACCOUNTING SERVICES**
- Eide Bailly, LLP
- Fiebiger, Swanson, West & Co., PLLP
- OnSharp

**AUTOMOTIVE**
- Gateway Chevrolet
- Seventh Avenue Auto Salvage, Inc.
- USISCO Warehouse, Inc.

**AVIATION SERVICES**
- Fargo Jet Center/Weather Modification
- Fargo Municipal Airport Authority

**BUSINESS SERVICES**
- Advanced Business Methods
- APAC Customer Services
- Arbor Ventures
- Executive Management Systems, Inc.
- Indigo Signworks, Inc.
- Holy Services

**CORPORATE CENTERS**
- Bobcat Company
- Border States Electric
- O’Malley Construction
- John Deere Electronic Solutions

**ELECTRICAL/HEATING/PLUMBING EQUIPMENT & SUPPLIES**
- Dakota Supply Group, Inc.
- Northern Plumbing Supply

**FINANCIAL**
- Alexco Financial
- American Farm Bureau Bank
- Bank of the West
- First State Bank & Trust
- Bremner Financial Corporation
- Choice Financial Group
- The First State Bank of North Dakota
- Gable City Bank
- Heartland Trust Co.
- Ramsey National Bank & Trust Co.
- U.S. Bank
- Wells Fargo Bank
- Western State Bank

**HOSPITALS/CLINICS/MEDICAL SERVICES**
- DMS Health Technologies
- Essentia Health
- INRAYS Institute
- Sanford Health

**INSURANCE**
- Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Dakota
- Concordia General Agency, Inc.
- Dawson Insurance
- H&N Country Insurance Company
- National Mutual Insurance Company
- Warner and Company Insurance

**MANUFACTURING & MANUFACTURING SERVICES**
- Amy Technology Group
- Caterpillar Reman Divestiture, LLC
- Crazy Industries
- Fargo Automation
- Granda Industries
- Grozzer Products
- The Marvin Companies
- Mucknak Steel
- TrueNorth Steel

**MEDIA**
- Forum Communications Co.
- KVLY-TV 11
- Fargo Moorhead

**REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT & SERVICES**
- AM Realtors
- Coldwell Banker First Realty
- Federated Properties
- Goldmark Schlossman
- Commercial Real Estate

**TELECOMMUNICATIONS & UTILITIES**
- Cable One Inc.
- Cass County Electric Cooperative
- Enertec
- Moorhead Public Service
- Xcel Energy

**WELLNESS & DISTRIBUTION**
- Bergseth Bros. Co., Inc.
- Beverage Wholesalers, Inc.
- D-S Beverages, Inc.
- FGOH2O Inc.
- Systo North Dakota

**Top 10 for Growth**
- Area Development Magazine put Fargo on its "Top Ten MSA's for Economic and Job Growth" list.

The publication ranked 365 MSAs across 23 economic and workforce indicators.
Our Staff

Lilybx Larson  
Manager, Office Manager

James Gartin  
President

Trai Eirke  
Vice President  
Workforce Development

John Michalek  
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2013 Board

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City Mayor, 2014
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