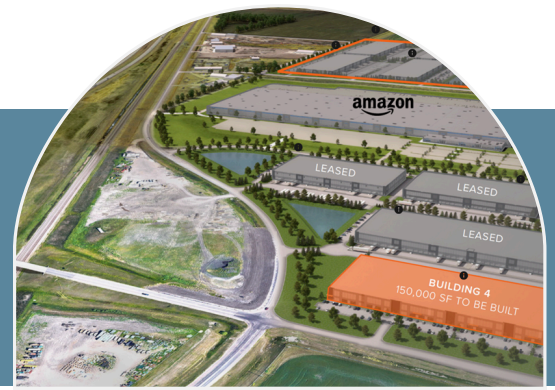


BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP

The working group will advise GFMEDC on their development and implementation strategies and metrics to measure progress of the business development goals.



PURPOSE *Why we're doing it*

The working group will be formed to strengthen the region's business development efforts by coordinating strategies, sharing market intelligence, and advancing opportunities that support long-term economic growth. It serves as a bridge between public, private, and institutional partners to ensure the region presents a unified, competitive value proposition to prospective and existing companies. This working group is designed to be a collaborative, action-oriented platform designed to align regional partners around business attraction, expansion, and retention priorities.

This group will serve in an **advisory** role making recommendations and offering suggestions and expertise. The decision to implement and execute strategies and suggestions will fall under the authority of GFMEDC staff.

FOCUS *What we will do*

The lens of the working group should be calibrated to serve the mission of the GFMEDC. The work that will be conducted could include but need not be limited to the following:

Opportunity alignment: Reviewing active leads, expansion projects, and industry trends while coordinating partner roles and responses.

Target industry strategy: Refining and executing strategies for priority sectors based on data, regional assets, and competitive positioning.

Product readiness: Identifying gaps in sites, buildings, utilities, or workforce pipelines and advancing solutions.

Intelligence sharing: Exchanging real-time insights on business needs, investment timelines, and regional challenges.

Partner coordination: Ensuring consistent messaging, streamlined communication, and efficient project delivery.

Marketing strategy: Providing program analysis and measurement and making targeted contacts to increase saturation in desired industries.

Metric Development and Progress Measurement: develop a set of metrics to measure progress of business development goals and track the results.

This work supports and aligns with the **Innovate28** goals and timeline, ensuring data efforts are directly tied to regional strategy.

COMPOSITION

Who will be involved

The working group will be volunteer in nature and formed at the discretion and invitation of GFMEDC staff to stakeholders including but not limited to:

- State, local, and regional government representatives (ND Commerce, city staff, county staff, regional council staff, etc.)
- Utilities and infrastructure providers
- Higher Ed and workforce partners
- Commercial real estate developers and/or site selectors
- Industry leaders or sector champions aligned with target industries
- GFMEDC Investors
- External experts who may add specialized expertise to this group

Members will be selected based on:

- Practical experience
- Willingness to provide candid, constructive feedback
- Ability to represent broader stakeholder perspectives

Business Recruitment Lead



RYAN AASHEIM
Chief Business
Development Officer

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701-364-1919

STRUCTURE AND OPERATIONS

How we do our work

The Business Development Working group will be subdivided into 3 distinct subgroups to align with the GFMEDC three core business development functions: **BRE** (Business Retention and Expansion), **Entrepreneurship**, and **Business Recruitment and Attraction**.

Each subgroup will meet **2 times per year**. Working group members may choose to participate in more than one subgroup and, as a result, may end up individually participating in up to six meetings per year if they choose to be part of all 3 subgroups. Agendas are structured around actionable outcomes, such as:

- Updates on active projects and leads*
- Market and data insights
- Barriers and risk mitigation strategies
- Partner commitments and next steps

*Confidentiality protocols will be implemented to protect sensitive project information.

Entrepreneurship Lead



JOHN MACHACEK
Chief Innovation Officer

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701-364-1921

BRE Lead



JOEY NESS
VP Business Development

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OUTCOMES *What we will accomplish*

A well-run Business Development Working Group:

- Improves speed and effectiveness of business recruitment and expansion efforts
- Reduces duplication of effort across organizations
- Enhances the region's credibility with site selectors and investors
- Builds stronger, trust-based relationships among regional partners
- Ensures business development strategies remain data-driven and market-responsive
- Leads to engagement in marketing and recruitment services to enhance the implementation of a marketing strategy developed by this group

Ultimately, this working group enables the regional EDO to act as a convener and strategic leader—mobilizing partners around shared economic growth goals while delivering measurable results for the region.

GOALS

20

Company Expansions or Relocations

150

Strategic Engagements

75

Company Assists

7

Certified Sites

REPORTING

How we will track success

Reporting through 2028 will follow the already established timing, structure, and reporting platforms developed as part of the GFMEDC's plan of work in partnership with I28. To ensure all working group members are aligned, we will provide updates on our work at every meeting. Because this is a **public advisory body**:

- Public meeting notices, agendas, and minutes will be produced and archived.
- Key recommendations will be summarized for staff and leadership.
- Reporting will follow the existing structure of GFMEDC's Plan of Work, Innovate28 documentation, and related accountability frameworks.

IMPLEMENTATION *Timeline*

Phase 1: Formation (Q2-Q3 2026)

- Convene 1st Meetings
- Approve/finalize Business Recruitment/Development Strategic Plan
- Finalize target industries
- Update marketing materials

Phase 2: Strategic Planning (Q3-Q4)

- Identify key metrics and success measures
- Review market and industry trends
- Update marketing and promotional materials
- Execute proactive outreach campaigns