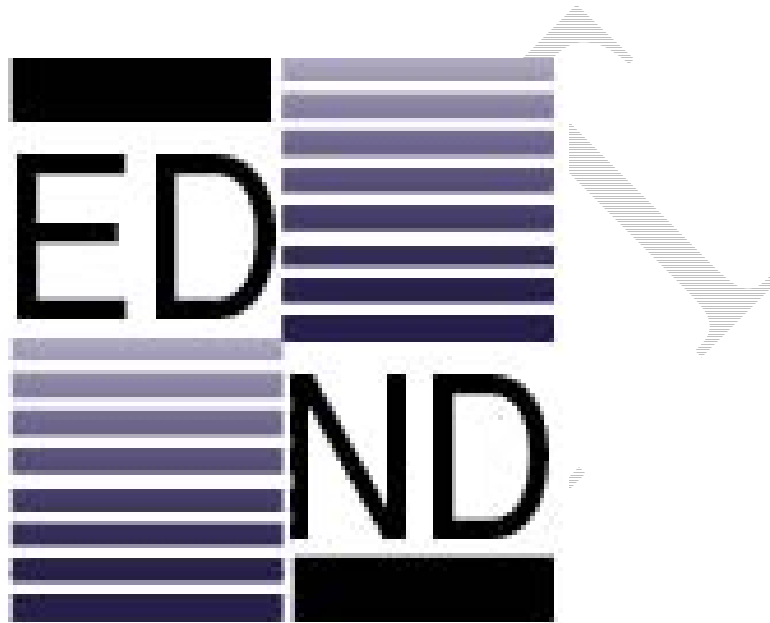


***ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
ASSOCIATION OF NORTH DAKOTA***



“2020 VISION AND BEYOND”

**Adopted
December 6, 2006**

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION OF NORTH DAKOTA

2007 Legislative Agenda

Goal #1 – TO PROMOTE CONTINUED CREATION OF NEW CAPITAL WEALTH IN NORTH DAKOTA

Goal #2 – TO INCREASE NORTH DAKOTA'S PER CAPITA INCOME

To achieve these goals, a clear definition of economic development must be understood. Economic development can be defined as a program, group of policies or activity that seeks to improve the economic well-being and quality of life for a community by creating and/or retaining jobs that facilitate the growth and provide a stable tax base. (As defined by the International Economic Development Council, or IEDC)

North Dakota is well-positioned to take advantage of current national economic trends and global events to continue and expand our efforts to create future economic opportunities. North Dakota's current financial strength, portfolio of economic development incentives, high-quality human capital, technology infrastructure and availability of natural resources are all in place to leverage those opportunities.

The Economic Development Association of North Dakota supports the development of the following targeted industries:

- Energy/Bio-materials/Agriculture – Energy partnering with agriculture
- Information Technology infrastructure and transmission
- Manufacturing – Retention and expansion of existing businesses
- Tourism – Destination-based Tourism Development

Support for the North Dakota Department of Commerce The Economic Development Association of North Dakota supports the structure and resources of the North Dakota Department of Commerce, including the efforts of the ND Trade Office. EDND also supports DOC initiatives to attract and retain young people in addition to attracting business and addressing under-employment training needs.

Agriculture Support & Development Agriculture remains one of our most vital industries. Efforts must be made at the state level to continue to support existing programs and to continue the development of new programs that have the capacity to support the shift in our State from a commodity producing State to a value-added agriculture producing State. North Dakota must also take advantage of the opportunity to co-develop the industries of agriculture and energy.

- Continue support of Ag Products Utilization Commission at its current level of funding or greater.
- Support animal agriculture development

Economic Development Finance and Incentive Programs The State of North Dakota must continue to provide finance and incentive programs to support future business start-up, expansion and recruitment projects. EDND supports maintaining the following existing programs with the identified resources that result in new wealth.

- ND PACE – Expand current funding.
- FLEX PACE – Expand current funding.
- AG-PACE - Leave the program as is presently structured and funded.
- North Dakota Development Fund – Support keeping the program (including the regional rural development portion of the fund) in place, and support increasing the funding for the program.
- Community Development Block Grant Program - Leave the program as is presently structured.
- Renaissance Zones and Renaissance Fund Organizations – Recommend continuing existing program.
- Corporate Income Tax Exemptions – Recommend extending corporate income tax exemption from five years to ten. Recommend allowing an income tax exemption if a business receives a property tax exemption under tax increment financing.
- Property Tax Exemptions – Recommend extending property tax exemptions from five years to a maximum of ten years.
- Sales & Use Tax Exemptions on Manufacturing, Processing and IT Equipment – Support continued program as presently structured.
- Centers of Excellence – EDND supports centers of excellence throughout the North Dakota University System with the end-goal of providing statewide business opportunities.
- New Venture Capital Fund – Recommend continued support of this program.
- Regional Councils – Support continued or expanded funding.

- SBDCs – Support continued or expanded funding.
- Job Development Authorities – Support an amendment to expand the powers and duties of JDAs.
- Support development of programs that are not tied only to new jobs created and/or primary sector business in recognition of the diverse needs of communities based on differences in size, location, and definition of vital services.

Economic Development Marketing, Public Relations and Education To realize earlier stated goals, the State of ND must successfully start-up new companies, retain and expand existing companies and recruit outside companies through a well defined strategy that would include:

- Support business attraction marketing programs.
- Maintain the Manufacturers Extension Partnership and SBDC programs to assess the needs of ND businesses and deliver opportunities to support productivity.
- Continued support for educational programs, certification, and funding targeted at promoting professionalism and skills development for in-state economic development professionals.
- Support community leadership development programs.

Energy Maximize the creation of jobs and importation of new wealth by:

- Exercising environmental responsibility by promoting the implementation of clean coal energy conversion technology;
- Supporting research and publications that stimulate the market for Ethanol and Biodiesel products;
- Supporting improved methods and financial structures for moving North Dakota energy products to market;
- Maintaining reasonable regulation and taxation policies applicable to Oil and Gas production.

Higher Education

- Continue direction to the ND University System to strengthen and/or develop program offerings that are flexible, responsive and relevant to statewide economic development targeted industries and emerging industries.
- Support funding for programs and facilities targeted for public/private research contracts, commercialization of new technologies, and entrepreneurship as a tool for economic development.
- Support higher education budgeting flexibility.

Transportation Support & Development EDND recognizes the importance of all forms transportation associated with economic development and supports the further development of transportation infrastructure, which encourages business development and commercial and tourism ventures that promote growth for the State of North Dakota.

Workforce Development The State is realizing growth in new jobs being created and total statewide employment. This has begun to create a shortage of workers. To support continued growth, the State of North Dakota must continue to support workforce development, training, and recruitment programs. Existing programs that have been extremely successful and need to be continued and funded at higher levels include:

- Workforce 2020 – Keep current funding level and request additional funding for expanded training of ‘soft skilled’ workers [supervisory & management staff] as defined by primary sector businesses.
- New Jobs Training Program - Maintain the program as presently designed.
- Workforce Training Initiative – Continue supporting the Workforce Training Initiative passed by the 1999 legislative session.
- Workforce Development Division labor recruitment program – continue to support funding for a web-based employment recruitment portal which provides access to all web based job opportunities in North Dakota and provide a budget to support the marketing for these career opportunities
- Labor Studies – Continue funding level of \$150,000 per biennium to assist communities and regions in their efforts to provide current data regarding available workers.
- Support new program to help address short-term training needs of the underemployed workforce.