



## 2022 PARTNERS IN PLANNING GRANT PROGRAM

**Purpose:** The Main Street Initiative (MSI) Partners in Planning (PiP) grant program supports non-profit organizations and/or local governments in completing a comprehensive plan or economic development/diversification strategic plan.

**Mission:** The Department of Commerce leads the efforts to attract, retain, and expand wealth and improve the quality of life for the people of North Dakota.

**Program Objective:** This grant program is intended to empower communities to proactively plan their futures, seek smart, efficient infrastructure development, and offer a healthy, vibrant environment for residents and visitors.

**Eligibility:** PiP will support two types of grants to non-profits and/or local governments in North Dakota:

1. **Comprehensive Plans** – intended to partially fund the creation of a new comprehensive plan, or for an update to an existing comprehensive plan that is more than five years old. This grant may also be used for a component plan related to an existing adopted comprehensive plan that is less than five years old. The plan must address at least one of these three of the pillars of Main Street Initiative: 21<sup>st</sup> Century workforce; smart, efficient infrastructure; and healthy, vibrant communities.

A comprehensive plan for the local government should be a guide to a community/political subdivision's physical, social, and economic development. Comprehensive plans are not meant to serve as land use regulations in themselves; instead, they provide a rational basis for local land use decisions with a long-term, strategic vision for future planning and political subdivision/community decisions.

**Eligible Entities** – local political subdivisions (city, school, park, EDC, local tribal entity) or non-profit organization applying on behalf of a local government if accompanied by a letter of support for the grant AND proposed planning activities.

2. **Economic Development/Diversification Strategic Plan** – intended to partially fund the creation of a new economic development plan or for a comprehensive update to an existing plan that is more than five years old for a community and/or region. The plan must address the fourth pillar of the Main Street Initiative: Economic development and Diversification along with workforce. An economic development plan may specifically address economic recovery due to impacts of the Coronavirus pandemic.

An economic development plan should empower communities and political subdivisions to maintain a sense of place, become more resilient given economic challenges and opportunities, and can increase their overall community wellbeing. A strategic economic

development plan helps individuals and communities see where they want to go and make decisions on how to get there.

**Eligible Entities** – City, County, Economic Development organization (JDA, regional Councils, EDC, CVB) and local tribal entities

A community is eligible to apply for multiple rounds, contingent the current PiP project is completed, and Commerce has received all deliverables and activities outlined in the approved budget. Non-government entities must be registered with the North Dakota Secretary of State's office to be eligible to receive funding.

**How much funding is available?** PiP funds are from the North Dakota Department of Commerce (Commerce) Momentum Funds.

**Urban** shall be defined as any community or region, based on the application, that exceeds a total population of 5,001 based on the 2020 Census data.

**Rural** shall be defined as any community or region, based on the application, with a population of less than 5,000.

**Matching Requirements:** This grant requires a community match, and all grant payments are made on a reimbursement basis. Matching dollars cannot be from other State of North Dakota funds.

Funds are available to pay for approved activities up to the percentage outlined in the metric chart of the activity budget. Match requirements vary by community – see chart below outlining match requirements.

Match funds are required to be recorded and submitted for approval at the time of reimbursement. Match funds can be allocated from any private or public source and in-kind contributions will be considered, although applications proposing a financial match will be scored more favorably. Pledges for future donations will not be considered part of a cash match.

Commerce will award grants that will only support one or both types of plans listed above. Funds will not be used for specific community events or for specific businesses.

Activities in the outlined budget must not have commenced prior to grant approval or submission of application for grant.

**2022 Timeline:** Grants may be awarded in multiple rounds. The timeline as follows:

**Round 1**

- **OPEN** – November 30, 2021
- **CLOSE** – January 31, 2022
- **Award** announcement May 15, 2022

**Project Timeline:** All Partners in Planning projects must be completed within 18 months of award notification.

### The Main Street Initiative (MSI) Community Advantage

	Points on App.	Maximum Award	Minimum Award	Match Required
Community/Region		\$22,500	\$5,000	<b>35%</b> of amount requested - or up to \$7,875
MSI Community	+2 bonus	\$25,000	\$7,500	<b>25%</b> of amount requested- or up to \$5,625
MSI Champion Community	+5 bonus	\$30,000	\$7,500	<b>20% of amount requested</b> -or up to \$6,000

An awarded community is limited to the total maximum grant award, per biennium.

**Granting Agency Involvement:** The Department of Commerce maintains the right to be involved in the activities awarded as a result of the grant.

1. **Collateral Material:** The Department of Commerce reserves the right for editorial comment on all aspects of the materials. At minimum, the following statement needs to be included in collateral materials produced with Partners in Planning funds: *"Produced in partnership with the North Dakota Department of Commerce."* We also request placement of the Commerce logo on materials or as a link on web sites.
2. **Partner Advertising:** The Department of Commerce reserves the right for editorial comment on all aspects of advertising materials.

**What makes for a strong application?** Applications that indicate commitment and participation from city leadership as well as other local partners (school board, park board, JDA) will be scored favorably. The community need for financial assistance with a planning project as well as the need to update a local plan will be considered. Applicants proposing a regional or multi-community approach to an economic development plan may be scored favorably. Projects with well-developed budgets will also be scored favorably.

**SFN Form 59398 and Narrative Description Application Questions:** Please briefly address the following in a separate, typewritten document. Point total is 150.

- I. **SFN Form 59398**
- II. **Description of community and organization (25 points)**
  - a. Please provide a clear, concise description of your community's vision for its future.
  - b. Please provide a clear, concise description of your organization and the role that it will play in the development and/or implementation of this plan.
  - c. If awarded this funding will you contract with an external organization or complete the project in-house? If you will be contracting, have you identified the contractor you will be utilizing.
- III. **Community Involvement (20 points)**

- a. If awarded, please describe briefly how you plan to engage a diverse representation of your community in the planning process.
- b. Please describe how you intend to engage youth (21 and under) in a meaningful way during this process.
- c. If applying for funding for an economic development or diversification strategy, do you plan to coordinate with any other nearby communities (i.e. use a regional approach when looking at economic development)? If yes, please explain.

**IV. Project Budget and Timeline (10 points)**

- a. Please provide a detailed project budget highlighting sources of any matching funding (including in-kind resources).
- b. Please provide a detailed project timeline, showing when, if funded, you anticipate the planning project would commence and be completed. Please include interim and major milestones in the planning process.

**V. Need for Project Funding (30 points)**

- a. Does your community have the financial resources to fund this project without assistance from the Department of Commerce? Please explain.
- b. Does your community have a current comprehensive or economic development/diversification plan (prepared or updated within the last five years)?
  - i. If not, in what year was your last comprehensive plan completed or updated?
- c. What are you hoping to achieve by updating or preparing a community plan?

**VI. Main Street Initiative (15 points)**

- a. Is your community engaged in the Main Street Initiative?
  - i. No
  - ii. Yes – we are a Main Street Community (we have signed up, had a visit from the state, and have agreed to share updates)
  - iii. Yes – we are a Main Street Champion Community (we have done all of the above plus we have issued a formal Main Street Proclamation and submitted our Main Street Action Plan)
- b. Please describe how, if awarded, your community plan will incorporate the following elements:
  - i. Smart, efficient infrastructure development
  - ii. Healthy, vibrant community
  - iii. 21<sup>st</sup> Century workforce
  - iv. Diversify economic capacity of community/region

**Supplemental Materials (50 points total for this section):**

**1. Main Street Initiative Engagement**

- a. If your community is a Main Street Champion Community, along with your completed application please submit the following:
  - i. Signed Main Street Community Proclamation issued from the City Council/Commission
  - ii. Completed Main Street Action Plan

**2. Most recent community plan(s)**

- a. Please submit or link to a copy of your community's most recent plan(s) (strategic, economic development, comprehensive, etc.)
3. **Letter of support from local organizations and/or political entities**
  - a. **Please provide a letter of support, indicating participation in the process and specifically referring to this grant application, from any of the following partners**
    - i. Local school district
    - ii. Local park and recreation district (or similar)
    - iii. JDA, chamber or other economic and/or community development organization
    - iv. City and/or County Commission/Council
  - b. Nonprofits that are applying on behalf of a city/political subdivision must have a letter of commitment for the application included to be considered for funding.

**Application Deadline:** Please ensure that you address each of the questions above in your application *on a separate document*. All application materials must be received at the Department of Commerce office no later than **5:00 pm CT on January 31, 2022**. Applications received after the deadline will not be considered by the review committee.

*Mailing Address:* North Dakota Department of Commerce  
Attn: Tammy Heck Partners in Planning Grant  
1600 East Century Ave #6  
Bismarck, ND 58503

*To email your application:* Tammy Heck – [communitydevelopment@nd.gov](mailto:communitydevelopment@nd.gov)  
Please include "Partners in Planning Grant Application" in the subject line of the email submission

*For more information:* Tracey Miller  
701-595-4584  
[tracmiller@nd.gov](mailto:tracmiller@nd.gov)