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Economic Development Tool Made Available to Montana Communities

(HELENA) - The Governor's Office of Economic Development, Montana Department of Commerce, Montana Department of Labor and the Montana Economic Developers Association (MEDA) have partnered to make the BEAR (Business Expansion and Retention) Program available statewide. The Montana BEAR project provides economic development teams with the tools to help local business owners and operators access resources to improve and/or expand their businesses. The State's purchasing the rights to the BEAR program has made it far more affordable for Montana communities.

"Small businesses are the backbone of Montana's economy," said Governor Brian Schweitzer. "I'm proud to be able to offer this development tool to help our communities prosper."

Local business and community leaders form an assessment team that will conduct on-site surveys of the issues and needs of the local business and provide counsel on a variety of topics including marketing, accounting, and financing. The assessment team can also determine if the business is eligible for newly available Incumbent Workforce Training funds.

BEAR teams are available across the state. For information on a local office, or for details on the Program, please contact the offices of the Montana Economic Developers Association at 406.563.5259.

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