

STRENGTHENING ECONOMIES IN MONTANA

A Forum for Coal-Reliant Communities



BILLINGS, MONTANA
APRIL 18-19, 2018





WELCOME!

Welcome to ***Strengthening Economies in the Montana: A Forum for Coal-Reliant Communities!***

The National Association of Counties (NACo) and the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) Research Foundation thank you for joining us in Billings & Yellowstone County for this convening.

This interactive forum brings together counties and regions in Montana that are experiencing economic challenges due to the changing conditions of the coal industry for a series of educational sessions that we hope will inform locally-driven economic development plans. This program is designed to unite stakeholders from the public and private sectors to share best practices, lessons learned and explore new opportunities to support innovative and collaborative diversification efforts. We are excited for two days of plenary sessions and smaller group discussions covering a variety of topics including: entrepreneurship; technology; education and workforce development; community revitalization; and strategic partnerships. We've also included multiple opportunities for networking with peers, federal and state officials and other practitioners working in economic and community development at the local, regional and statewide level.

This is the second of four state-based convenings that NACo and the NADO Research Foundation will be facilitating through the remainder of the year. A similar event was held in October 2017 in Richfield/Sevier County, Utah; the next two forums are scheduled to take place in Wyoming and Colorado in June and October 2018, respectively.

Our three-year "*Building Stronger Economies in the West*" effort is made possible through the generous support of the U.S. EDA Denver Regional Office. In addition to the in-person trainings and workshops, we offer ongoing support and technical assistance to coal-reliant counties and regions across the Western U.S. through a biweekly newsletter and educational webinar series.

This event was developed with the support of the U.S. Economic Development Administration Denver Regional Office. Any opinions, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed during this event do not necessarily reflect the views of NACo, NADO RF or U.S. EDA.



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Let's Get Social!

We invite you to interact with us on social media throughout the event.

Facebook: [@National Association of Counties\(NACo\)](#) | [@NADO.org](#)

Twitter: [@NACoTweets](#) | [@NADOWeb](#)

LinkedIn: [@NACo](#) | [@NADO](#) | [@EntreWorksConsulting](#)

Please use and follow the hashtag [#readytodiversify](#)

Meeting Locations

Forum sessions on Wednesday (Apr. 18th) will be based at the Billings Food Bank facility, while the evening reception will be held at Last Chance Pub & Cider Mill (both located in downtown Billings).

Morning sessions and the luncheon on Thursday (Apr. 19th) will also be based at the Billings Food Bank, while the afternoon will consist of a guided tour and facilitated discussions on the Montana State University-Billings campus.

April 18th

Billings Food Bank
2112 4th Ave N, Billings, Mont.

April 19th

Billings Food Bank
2112 4th Ave N, Billings, Mont.

Last Chance Pub & Cider Mill
2203 Montana Ave., Billings, Mont.

Montana State University-Billings
110 Poly Dr., Billings, Mont.

See Pages 7-8 for Maps

Agenda

All sessions will be held at the Billings Food Bank, unless otherwise noted.

Wednesday April 18th

10:00 - 10:30 am	Registration / Check-in
10:30 - 11:00 am	Welcome, Introductions & Perspective <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sanah Baig, Program Director, National Association of Counties• Steve Arveschoug, Executive Director, Big Sky Economic Development• Robyn Driscoll, Commissioner, Yellowstone County, MT
11:00 - 11:45 am	Setting the Stage: An Overview of Economic Diversification <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dr. Erik Pages, President, EntreWorks Consulting
11:45 - 12:45 pm	Keynote Luncheon: Building More Innovative Economies – Lessons Learned from Appalachia <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Kevin Loux, Director of Strategic Partnerships, Shaping Our Appalachian Region (SOAR), Kentucky
12:45 - 1:15 pm	Fireside Chat: Entrepreneurship & Technology in Rural Montana <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dr. Erik Pages, President, EntreWorks Consulting• Christina Quick Henderson, Executive Director, Montana High Tech Business Alliance
1:15 - 1:30 pm	Networking Break
1:30 - 2:30 pm	Conversation Café: Part I Facilitated small-group breakouts to help define learning objectives for remainder of forum, promote cross-sectoral dialogue and spark new solutions to solve unique community challenges.
2:30 - 3:30 pm	Brownfields Redevelopment & Restoration Economy <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Emily Rhodes, Communities Specialist, Delta Institute• Samantha Chagnon, Brownfields Coordinator, Bear Paw Development Corporation• Kate French, Study Coordinator, Northern Plains Resource Council
3:00 - 3:10 pm	Networking Break



3:10 – 4:00 pm	Strategic Resources and Funding for Transitioning Communities <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cindy Winland, Senior Fellow, Just Transition Fund• Amity Rembold, Rural Development Specialist, Rural Community Assistance Corporation
4:00 – 5:00 pm	Billings Food Bank Tour & Service-Learning Opportunity
5:00 – 6:30 pm	Networking Reception & Mobile Tour <i>Last Chance Pub & Cider Mill 2203 Montana Ave, Billings, Mont.</i> The craft beer and spirits industry in Montana generates an annual statewide economic impact of more than \$60 million. In communities across Montana – large and small – breweries, cideries and distilleries are helping to support local farmers and entrepreneurs, revitalize downtowns and blighted areas, and create lively community gathering places. We invite you to join us for a tour and networking reception at Last Chance Pub & Cider Mill, as we showcase this growing industry and its impact. Opened in 2016, Last Chance is located in an expansive former warehouse in Historic Downtown Billings and utilizes local Montana apples at their in-house production facility.

Thursday April 19th

8:00 – 9:00 am	Breakfast Networking
9:00 – 10:00 am	Building Stronger Economies in Montana: Outlook and Opportunity <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mark Haggerty, Economic Geographer, Headwater Economics• Barbara Wagner, Chief Economist, Montana Department of Labor & Industry• Tash Wisemiller, Main Streets Program Coordinator, Montana Department of Commerce• Eric Bryson, Incoming Executive Director, Montana Association of Counties <i>(Moderator)</i>
10:00 – 10:15 am	Networking Break
10:15 – 11:15 am	Roadmaps to Diversification: Regional Planning in Action <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Kirk Keyser, Economic Development Representative, U.S. Economic Development Administration – Denver Regional Office• Jim Atchison, Executive Director, Southeastern Montana Development Corporation• Dianne Lehm, Director of Community Development, Big Sky Economic Development• Kathie Bailey, Executive Director, Snowy Mountain Development Corporation• Sue Taylor, Economic Development Director, Beartooth RC&D• Liz Ching, POWER-MT Coordinator, Montana Department of Labor & Industry <i>(Moderator)</i>

11:15 – 12:00 pm

Roadmaps to Diversification: Lessons Learned from the Colstrip Economic Diversification Strategy

- Jim Atchison, Executive Director, Southeastern Montana Development Corporation
- Becky Bey, Government Relations Specialist, KLJ Engineering
- Molly Herrington, Government Relations Manager, KLJ Engineering
- Brett Schwartz, Associate Director, NADO Research Foundation (*Moderator*)

12:00 – 1:00 pm

Working Lunch: Legislative Updates and Overview of Resources & Tools

- Brett Schwartz, Associate Director, NADO Research Foundation
- Jack Morgan, Program Manager for Community & Economic Development, National Association of Counties
- Daria Daniel, Associate Legislative Director for Community, Economic & Workforce Development, National Association of Counties

1:30 – 3:00 pm

Investing in the Future: Building a Skilled Workforce & Stronger Economy in Southeast Montana (Mobile Tour)

Montana State University at Billings | 110 Poly Dr., Billings, Mont.

Park and meet at campus parking garage at 1:30PM, before walking to the MSUB Science Building

Educating, training and retaining a specialized workforce is essential to building more vibrant and resilient economies across Montana. Join Montana State University-Billings leadership as they showcase major on-campus investments in STEAM and other vital fields that are helping to cultivate Southeast Montana's future workforce, while also supporting retraining for a transitional workforce dislocated from the coal industry. Following the tour will be a conversation with MSUB faculty and students to discuss how county, regional and private sector leaders can better coordinate with their local academic institutions to support the robust workforce needs of both current and potential employers.

3:00 – 4:15 pm

Conversation Café: Part II

Return to facilitated, small-group breakouts to outline key takeaways and economic diversification planning and implementation next steps and actions.

4:15 – 4:30 pm

Final Thoughts, Next Steps and Adjourn



NOTES

Billings, Montana

Billings Food Bank

 2112 4th Ave N

Hotel Northern

 19 N Broadway

Billings Logan International Airport

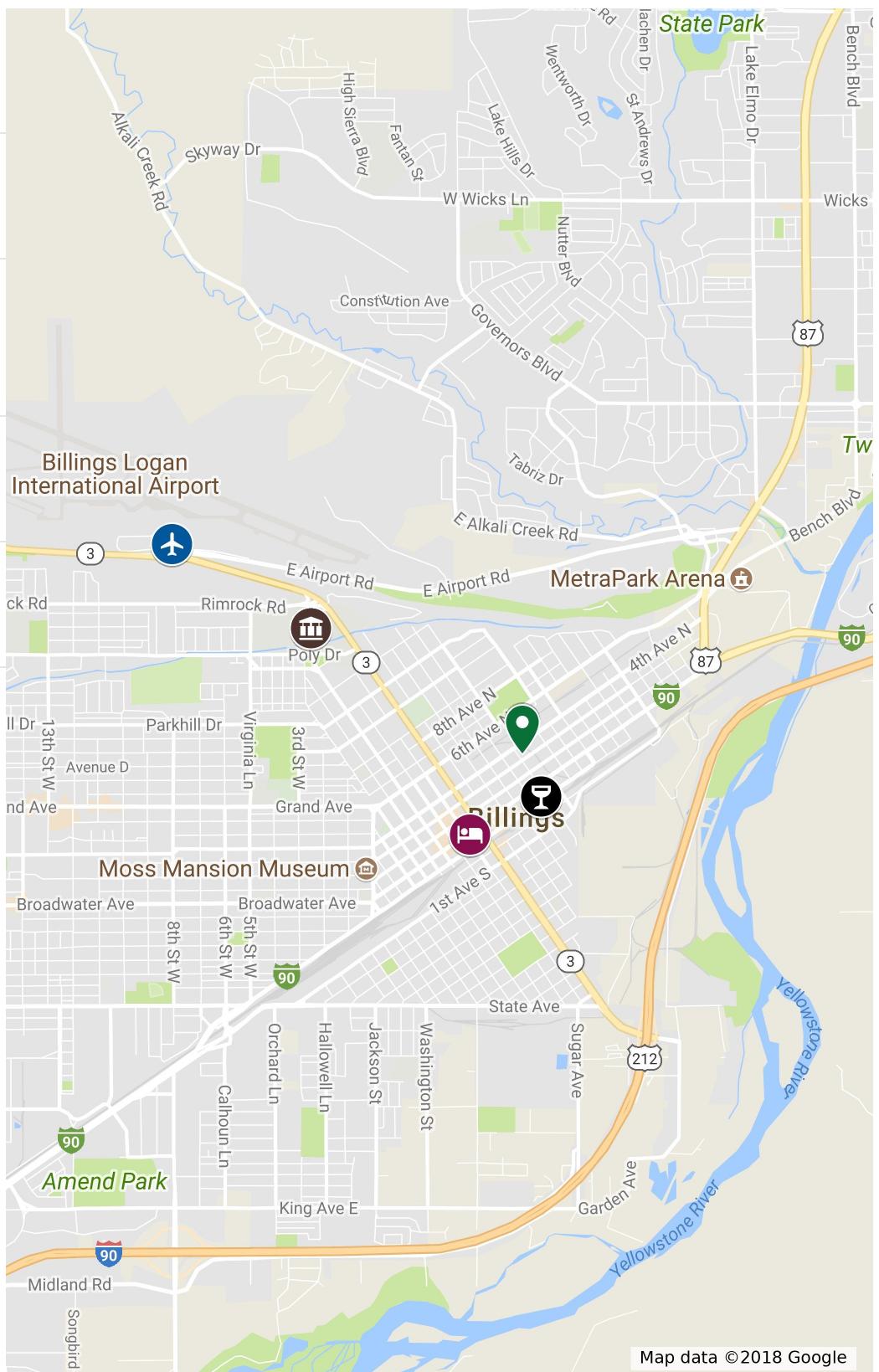
 1901 Terminal Circle

Montana State University-Billings

 1500 University Dr.

Last Chance Pub & Cider Mill

 2203 Montana Ave.



Downtown Billings

Billings Food Bank

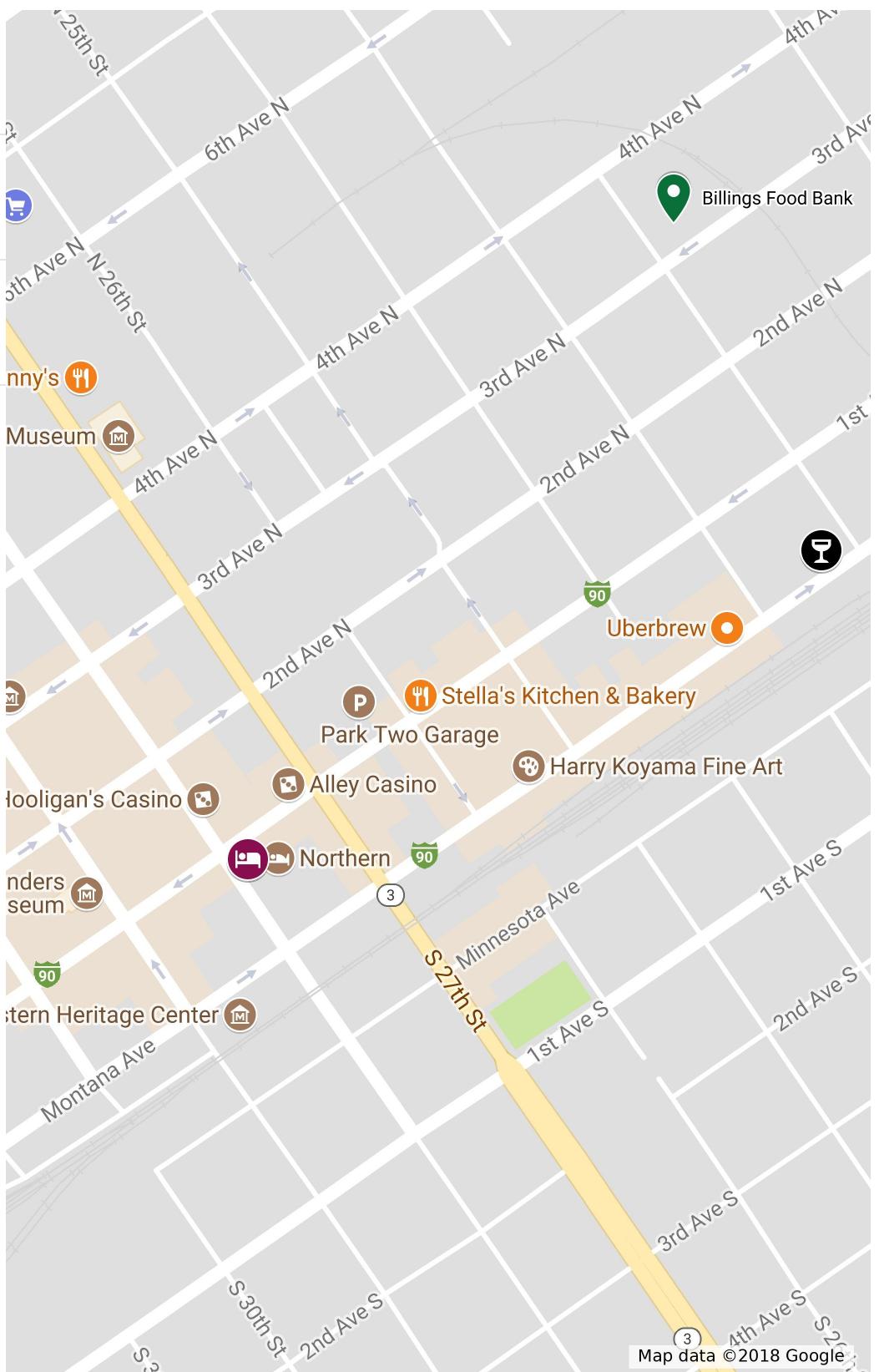
 2112 4th Ave N

Hotel Northern

 19 N Broadway

Last Chance Pub & Cider Mill

 2203 Montana Ave.



Strengthening Economies in Montana Forum Participant List

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