



# ENVISION

## 2026

A PLAN FOR  
MONTANA'S FUTURE

## 2017-18 ANNUAL REPORT



MONTANA  
CHAMBER OF  
COMMERCE



MONTANA  
CHAMBER  
FOUNDATION

# BUILDING A FOUNDATION

In fiscal year 2017-18, Envision 2026 laid the foundation for the long-term success both of Envision 2026 and our state's economy. The Montana Chamber Foundation embarked on its most aggressive year of research in its history. The Montana Chamber and Chamber Foundation formed new relationships with a wide variety of groups such as Youth Entrepreneurs® and the Council on State Taxation. Finally, the Montana Chamber reached out to Montanans to educate the public — two efforts of note include a statewide tour during Infrastructure Week and an Economic Update Series focusing on entrepreneurship.



This work is needed now more than ever. In 2017, Montana's Gross State Product only grew by 0.6 percent compared to a national average of 2.1 percent — dropping our 10-year average national ranking from 8th to 26th. In good news, wages continue to grow in Montana — especially in high-skill, high-wage sectors. Montana's year-over-year per capita personal income growth was 3.59 percent — fourth highest in the nation. You already see the fruits of Envision 2026 in many road and bridge projects in the state, thanks to the Chamber's integral role in facilitating the Montana Infrastructure Coalition.

In closing, I want to thank my fellow Montana business leaders for investing in Envision 2026 — including 16 new investors added this fiscal year. The commitment of the more than 60 investors of Envision 2026 shows not only the trust in Webb and his staff but the value of the plan. If you are not an investor, I urge you to contribute today.

Thank you and enjoy this report.

**ED GARDING**  
**Honorary Envision 2026 Chair**  
**First Interstate Bank, Billings**

## ENVISION 2026

**Ed Garding, Honorary Chair**  
First Interstate BancSystem, Billings

## MONTANA CHAMBER FOUNDATION EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP

**Tami Christensen**  
Tri-County Implement, Sidney

**Aimee Grmoljez**  
Crowley Fleck, Helena

**Webb Scott Brown**  
Montana Chamber Foundation, Helena

## MONTANA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP

**Greg Thayer**  
Montana Milling, Great Falls

**Bill McGladdery**  
Town Pump Hotel Group, Butte

**Richard Miltenberger**  
Montana Healthcare CO-OP, Helena

**Paul Hopfauf**  
Montana Dakota Utilities, Glendive

**Matt Jones**  
BNSF, Bozeman

**Todd O'Hair**  
Cloud Peak Energy, Helena

**Webb Scott Brown**  
Montana Chamber, Helena

# KEY GOALS

## TOP HALF

PER CAPITA PERSONAL  
INCOME



# 35th

(2016-17: 38th)

**Per Capita Personal Income** grew to \$43,907.00 in 2017 – below the U.S. average of \$49,571.00. 2016's Montana per capita personal income was \$42,386.00.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (2017)

## TOP 10

OF ALL US STATES  
IN GSP GROWTH



# 26th

(2016-17: 8th)

**Montana's Gross State Product (GSP) 10-year growth rate is 25.8%. Montana's GSP grew by 0.6% in 2017.**

Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (2017)

## TOP 10

OF ALL US STATES  
IN PERCENT OF JOB GROWTH



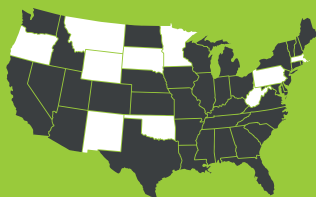
# 25th

(2016-17: 25th)

**From 2015 to 2017, jobs grew by 2.3% in Montana. To meet the top 10 goal, we would need to increase this to 4.3%. Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics (2017)**

## TOP 10

OF ALL US STATES IN PER  
CAPITA PERSONAL  
INCOME GROWTH



# 4th

(2016-17: 44th)

**Year-over-year per capita personal income grew in Montana by 3.59%. Ten-year income growth was 23.86% – 18th in the country. Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (2017)**



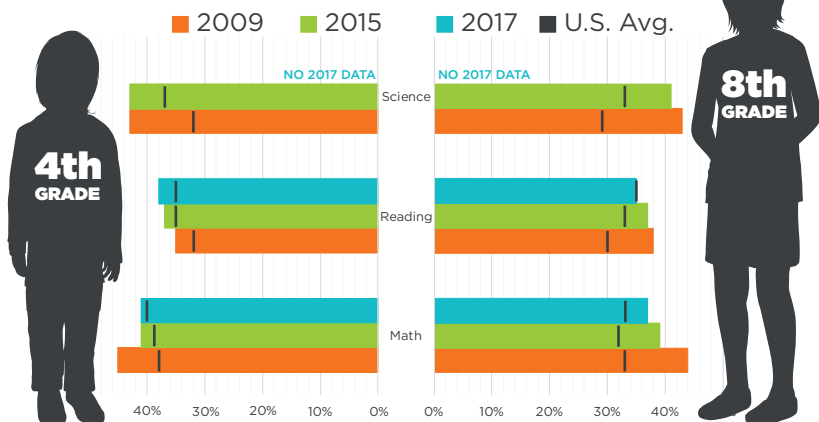
## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

PROMOTE AND SUPPORT STRATEGIES TO  
PROVIDE A QUALIFIED WORKFORCE

### ACHIEVEMENTS

- PANELS ON VARIOUS ASPECTS OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT INCLUDING RECRUITMENT, APPRENTICESHIPS, AND “SOFT SKILLS.”
- SUPPORTED THE 6-MILL LEVY THROUGH PRESENTATIONS AT KEY CHAMBER EVENTS.
- IDENTIFY KEY CERTIFICATIONS AND CREDENTIALS IN HIGH-GROWTH, HIGH-WAGE, AND HIGH-DEMAND INDUSTRIES IN MONTANA.

### Math, Reading, and Science Proficiency in Montana: 4th & 8th Grades



Source: National Center for Education Statistics,  
National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) (2018)



# KEY PROJECT

## **ACT® WORK READY COMMUNITIES® & NATIONAL CAREER READINESS CERTIFICATE®**

The Montana Chamber of Commerce is partnering with American College Testing (ACT®) to build awareness for two workforce training initiatives - Work Ready Communities® and the National Career Readiness Certificate®. With programs already operating in more than 400 Counties across the nation, we are working with ACT® to build a career ready workforce of our own in Montana.

## **MOVING FORWARD**

- PRIORITIZE SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, AND MATH (STEM) SKILLS AT ALL LEVELS OF EDUCATION.
- ADVOCATE FOR INNOVATIVE WORK / EDUCATION INITIATIVES SUCH AS WORK READY COMMUNITIES, DUAL ENROLLMENT OPTIONS, AND APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS.
- ADVOCATE FOR MORE INDUSTRY STANDARD CERTIFICATIONS AND CREDENTIALS AT THE SECONDARY AND POST-SECONDARY LEVEL - ESPECIALLY IN HIGH-WAGE, HIGH-DEMAND, AND HIGH-SKILL FIELDS.
- ESTABLISH A PILOT PROJECT FOR ONE COUNTY IN MONTANA TO BECOME A CERTIFIED ACT WORK READY COMMUNITY®.



# ENTREPRENEURSHIP

MAINTAIN STATUS AS NATIONAL LEADER  
AND FOSTER ENTREPRENEURIAL  
DEVELOPMENT

## ACHIEVEMENTS

- THE STATE OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN MONTANA REPORT.
- 2018 ECONOMIC UPDATE SERIES FOCUSED ON THE STATE OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP REPORT WITH NINE STOPS AND MORE THAN 650 ATTENDEES ACROSS THE STATE.
- YOUTH ENTREPRENEURS PILOT WORKSHOP ATTRACTED MORE THAN 40 EDUCATORS AND TEACHERS FROM AROUND THE STATE.

## 51.8% OF STARTING BUSINESSES REMAIN OPEN AFTER FIVE YEARS

51.8 percent of Montana firms founded five years ago are still operating - the ninth highest percentage in the nation. This is an increase from 42 percent of Montana firms founded in 2009.







# KEY PROJECT

## MAKE MONTANA HOME

Make Montana Home is a website dedicated to connect telecommuters, give rural communities a digital footprint, and recruit workers to Montana. Started thanks to a generous grant from the Gianforte Family Foundation, Make Montana Home will continue to grow in 2018-19 through new media content, connecting with rural communities, and advertising our Montana way of life to the nation.

See the progress we make. Go to [www.MakeMontanaHome.org](http://www.MakeMontanaHome.org).

## MOVING FORWARD

- ENHANCING MAKE MONTANA HOME TO PROVIDE A 'DIGITAL FOOTPRINT' FOR OUR RURAL COMMUNITIES.
- CONTINUE EFFORTS TO HELP MONTANA'S ECONOMY RETAIN, TRAIN, AND RECRUIT TALENT.
- RELEASE THE SECOND ANNUAL STATE OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN MONTANA REPORT.
- CONTINUE OUR HIGH SCHOOL BUSINESS CHALLENGE PROGRAM. OUR PROGRAM TO TEACH BUSINESS PRINCIPLES TO YOUTH, SO THEY DEVELOP AN INTEREST IN AND UNDERSTANDING OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP.



## BUSINESS BASICS

REDUCE THE COST OF DOING BUSINESS TO  
IMPROVE THE BUSINESS CLIMATE

### ACHIEVEMENTS

- COMPREHENSIVE STUDIES ON THE FUTURE OF COLSTRIP, CARBON CAPTURE TECHNOLOGIES, AND MONTANA'S TAX STRUCTURE.
- PUBLISHED 2018 JUDICIAL REVIEW AND HOSTED THE 2018 BUSINESS AND THE LAW CONFERENCE.
- REPRESENTING THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY IN A WIDE-RANGE OF LEGISLATIVE INTERIM COMMITTEE TOPICS INCLUDING HEALTH CARE PRICE TRANSPARENCY AND THE FUTURE OF MONTANA'S WORKERS COMPENSATION SYSTEM.

## Cost of Living In Montana

National Ranking

17th HIGHEST

3.9%

Higher than the  
National Average

*Cost of living in Montana versus  
the rest of the nation.  
U.S. Average = 100*

Grocery	107.4
Housing	106.4
Utilities	88.1
Trans.	97.9
Health	105.2
Misc.	106.3





# KEY PROJECT

## COUNCIL ON STATE TAXATION RESEARCH

For the last year, the Montana Chamber of Commerce has worked with the Council on State Taxation to examine Montana's tax system. We are finding ways to optimize our state's tax system to incorporate emerging sectors of our economy and fix institutional problems with Montana tax code. We hope to release this study in advance of the 2019 Legislative Session and use it as the basis for our tax and fiscal policy for years to come.

## MOVING FORWARD

- ENGAGE IN THE 2018 MID-TERM ELECTIONS BY PROMOTING PRO-BUSINESS CANDIDATES AND POLICIES.
- ADVOCATE FOR COMMON SENSE BUSINESS SOLUTIONS DURING THE 2019 LEGISLATIVE SESSION.
- MONTANA MANUFACTURING SUMMIT TO HIGHLIGHT MONTANA'S FASTEST GROWING ECONOMIC SECTOR.
- THROUGH OUR EYE ON BUSINESS AND SAFETY CHOICES PROGRAM, ENCOURAGE AND RECOGNIZE EXCELLENCE IN WORKPLACE SAFETY.
- PUBLISH FINDINGS OF THE COUNCIL ON STATE TAXATION REPORT.



# INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT

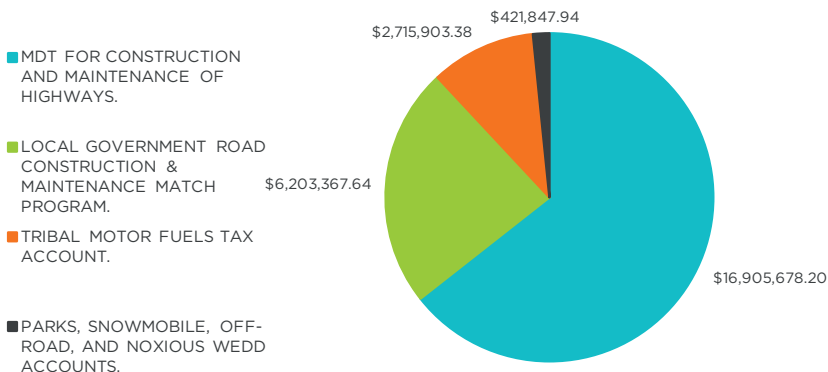
## ADDRESS CORE INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS TO SUPPORT BUSINESS

### ACHIEVEMENTS

- 16-STOP STATEWIDE TOUR DURING INFRASTRUCTURE WEEK.
- RESEARCHING AND PROMOTING PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS AS AN OPTION TO FINANCE CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS.
- WORKING WITH THE MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION TO ENSURE ACCOUNTABILITY AS MANDATED IN 2017'S BRIDGE AND ROAD SAFETY AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT.

### DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS RAISED BY THE BRIDGE AND ROAD SAFETY AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 2017

THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30, 2018.



Source: Montana Department of Transportation (2018)



# KEY PROJECT

## INFRASTRUCTURE WEEK TOUR

The staff of the Montana Infrastructure Coalition, Montana League of Cities and Towns, and the Montana Chamber of Commerce engaged in a weeklong tour around Montana to highlight current critical infrastructure projects and the massive need in many of our rural communities for water and sewer infrastructure investment.

## MOVING FORWARD

- ADVOCATE FOR THE PASSAGE OF BONDING LEGISLATION FOR CRITICAL WATER AND SEWER PROJECTS IN THE STATE.
- PASSAGE OF LEGISLATION TO ALLOW FOR PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS TO FINANCE KEY INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS.
- CONTINUE MONITORING AND REPORTING ON THE REVENUE COLLECTED BY THE MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE 2017 BRIDGE AND ROAD SAFETY AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT.
- WORK WITH OUR TELECOMMUNICATIONS PARTNERS TO SEE HOW WE CAN ENHANCE AND GROW MONTANA'S BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE.
- SCHEDULE OUR SECOND ANNUAL "INFRASTRUCTURE WEEK" TOUR IN MAY 2019.

# FINANCIALS, FUNDRAISING, COMMUNICATIONS, & RESEARCH

## FINANCIALS

The second fiscal year of Envision 2026 has been marked with strong support from 61 investor companies and foundations - totaling more than \$1.3 million in pledges over the first six years of the plan. Our goal is to continue growing this investor class to include more Montana companies and foundations.

### PLEDGES AT END OF FISCAL YEAR

<b>2016-17</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>2017-18</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>2018-19</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>2019-20</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>2020-21</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>2021-22</b>	<b>8</b>

Much of our investments in fiscal year 2017-18 have centered around research, support for the Montana Infrastructure Coalition, statewide tours, outreach, and investor communications.

Looking toward 2018-19, we anticipate continuing investments such as the Council on State Taxation and Entrepreneurship in Montana studies. We also look forward to the next phase of Make Montana Home, High School Business Challenge, and public outreach initiatives. Finally, during the 2019 Legislative Session, we will be spending investing in research and advocacy as pressing issues that have an impact on Envision 2026 emerge.



# FUNDRAISING

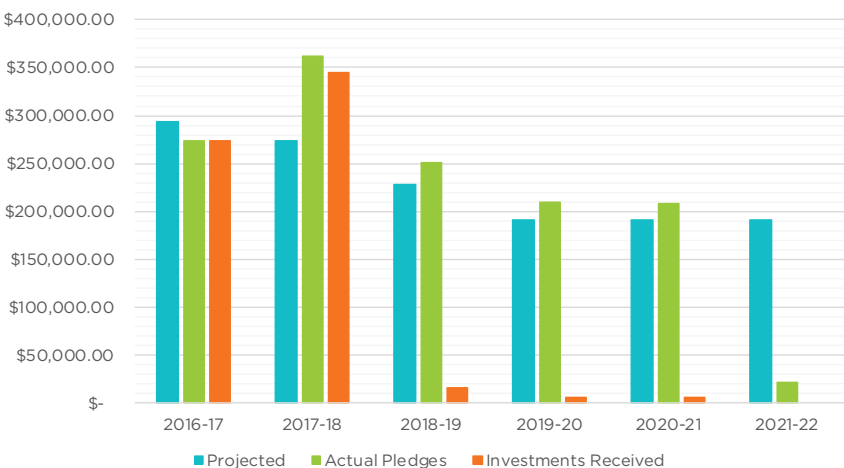
With two years of Envision 2026 under our belt, we feel confident we can continue the momentum of our fundraising efforts. In fiscal year 2017-2018, the Montana Chamber staff met with more than a hundred current and potential investors in Envision 2026. This resulted in 16 additional investors totaling more than \$80,000 in new pledges to the plan.

In fiscal year 2018-19, we will meet with more potential investors and provide materials illustrating the results of our work. In addition to recruiting new private companies, we will also aggressively pursue opportunities for grants and endowments based on the efforts of Envision 2026.

We are especially proud of how many of our investors we've retained in the first two years - more than 95.2 percent of pledges followed through on their promise. This is a credit to the plan that Convergent laid out in January 2017 and followed through Montana Chamber staff. We will continue this investment rate in fiscal year 2018-19.

**95.2%**  
**OF PLEDGES FULFILLED**  
**IN 2017-18 FISCAL YEAR**

ENVISION 2026 Fundraising Performance



# COMMUNICATIONS

Developing additional communications tools and distributing research materials has been a major focus in fiscal year 2017-18. Our investor communications efforts are centered around five efforts:

- **Six Envision 2026 E-updates sent to all investors.**
- **Updating our Envision 2026 dashboard which shows the latest rankings and metrics to which we are holding ourselves accountable.**
- **Four quarterly Envision 2026 “investor only” webinars.**
- **250 copies of our 2016-17 Annual Report distributed to all plan investors, Boards of the Chamber and Foundation, and our top prospective investors.**



- **Public awareness materials such as our new Envision 2026 booklet aimed at informing the public and investor recruitment.**

In 2018-19, the first half of the year will be dominated by the 2019 Legislative Session.

The legislative session means everyone here at the Chamber will work to develop communications and outreach materials on emerging issues.

In preparation for the session, we are finishing white papers, message development, and other items as part of a session Communications Plan which Alexandria Klapmeier is putting together for staff. All of this will culminate with our 2019 Voting Review.

In the second half of 2018-19, we will continue developing research and outreach opportunities for Envision 2026 and marketing the plan to increase our investor base. This includes current grant work such as the Make Montana Home website.

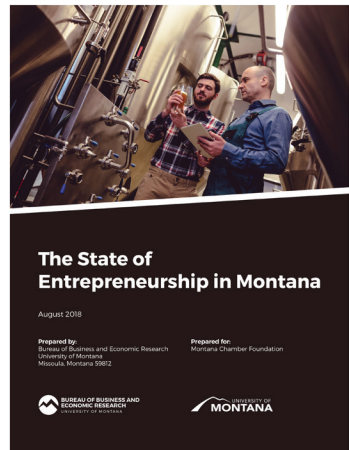


# RESEARCH

Outreach campaigns and developing independent research is a focus for Envision 2026. Research is a vital component of Envision 2026 as it allows us to look at issues of statewide significance and to develop innovative solutions for Big Sky Country.

This fiscal year was marked by four significant studies done on behalf of Envision 2026. These include:

- **MONTANA TAX STUDY:** In partnership with the Council on State Taxation, this study is a two-year comprehensive analysis of Montana's tax structure.
- **CARBON CAPTURE, UTILIZATION, & SEQUESTRATION :** A look at carbon capture technologies. Including sequestration feasibility, need, and the effectiveness of such processes.
- **ECONOMIC IMPACT OF COLSTRIP UNITS THREE AND FOUR:** An economic assessment an early retirement scenario for Colstrip units three and four.
- **THE STATE OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN MONTANA:** A look at the current state of entrepreneurship in Montana, including emerging economic sectors and small business viability.



This trend will continue for the 2018-19 fiscal year. Not only will continue ongoing studies such as the Montana Tax Study and the State of Entrepreneurship in Montana but, also examine new research projects as opportunities arise.

# THANK YOU TO ENVISION 2026

## CHAIR'S CIRCLE



## PRESIDENT'S CIRCLE



# ALL OF OUR INVESTORS

## PARTNER LEVEL

ASH GROVE CEMENT\* | CENTURY GAMING | CHS  
| CLOUD PEAK ENERGY | FLATHEAD ELECTRICAL  
COOPERATIVE | GLACIER BANCORP | HI-HEAT |  
MONTANA-DAKOTA UTILITIES | MONTANA MILLING  
| NORTHERN BROADCASTING\* |  
SWANK ENTERPRISES\*

## ADVOCATE LEVEL

LC STAFFING | REPUBLIC SERVICES | TOWN PUMP HOTEL GROUP |  
ALASKA AIRLINES\* | ALPS\* | ARROW SOLUTIONS GROUP |  
BLACKFOOT\* | BROWNING, KALECZYC, BERRY & HOVEN\* |  
CROWLEY FLECK | HECLA MONTANA | KLJ | MONTANA HEALTHCARE  
CO-OP\* | TRI-COUNTY IMPLEMENT | DELTA AIRLINES | FOLKVORD  
FAMILY FOUNDATION | PAYNEWEST | WEAVE COMPANIES |  
WYO-BEN | JUNKERMIER, CLARK, CAMPANELLA, & STEVENS, PC\* |  
AVISTA\* | BEST BURGER ENTERPRISES | BILLINGS CLINIC |  
MORRISON-MAIERLE\* | OPPORTUNITY BANK\* |  
ROWE AND REYNOLDS CHARITABLE FUND | TOWHAUL\* | WOOD'S  
POWR-GRIP | INTERWEST HEALTH | NATURENER USA |  
TAYLOR LUTHER GROUP | ULTRA GRAPHICS | WEST PAW DESIGN

## ENDORSEMENTS

MONTANA ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS | BIG SKY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE |  
BILLINGS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE | GREAT FALLS AREA CHAMBER OF  
COMMERCE | SIDNEY AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND AGRICULTURE







## IN CLOSING...

The second year of Envision 2026 has capped off a great 2017-18 fiscal year for the Montana Chamber of Commerce and Montana Chamber Foundation. As you have read in this report, we've had some remarkable achievements this year and set the table for long-term success.

As we look towards the 2019 Legislative Session, we know the groundwork and research we've developed this year will pay dividends for Envision 2026 during the Session and beyond.

We could not have done this without the commitment and financial support by our Envision 2026 investors. Thank you.

In closing, we would ask three things.

If you are not an Envision 2026 investor, we would love to have you on board.

We are always looking for feedback on our plan. Please go to [www.Envision2026.com](http://www.Envision2026.com) to see what we are up to and share with us your ideas.

Finally, if you know anyone who might be interested in the projects of Envision 2026, we would love to talk with them.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you.

**WEBB BROWN**  
President and CEO  
Montana Chamber of Commerce

## **TO LEARN HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT ENVISION 2026 CONTACT:**

### **Webb Brown**

President & CEO  
(406) 431-9508  
Webb@MontanaChamber.com

### **Dan Brunell**

Operations Director  
(406) 431-3248  
Dan@MontanaChamber.com

## **OUR VISION**

As the leading business advocate, the Montana Chamber of Commerce envisions a business climate that is optimal for Montana business prosperity.

## **OUR MISSION**

To create and sustain an optimal business climate, business prosperity and a strong Montana economy, the Montana Chamber of Commerce - through advocacy, education, and collaboration - works to provide an empowered and educated workforce, reduce business growth obstacles, and advance positions that promote success for Montana businesses.

## **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**

Over the next 10 years, the Montana Chamber of Commerce will create the opportunity for business growth and prosperity by improving Montana's business climate, quality of life, talent pipeline, and entrepreneurship through regulatory and legal reform, infrastructure investment and workforce development.



**WE MEAN BUSINESS**