



Glacier County Economic Development

**Fiscal Year 2026
Annual Report**

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Vision and Mission Statements

Our vision is to be the best resource for business assistance, through collaborations and partnerships, for all communities within and surrounding Glacier County.

The mission of Glacier County Economic Development is to promote, stimulate, and advance the general welfare, commerce, economic development, and prosperity of its region.

Board Members

Rod Cline, Chairman | City of Cut Bank
Appointed February 2022, Term Expires 2026

Tony Sitzmann, Vice-Chairman | Glacier County
Appointed June 2020, Term Expires 2029

Mike Schultz, Treasurer | City of Cut Bank
Appointed July 2021, Term Expires 2026

Skye Gilham | Glacier County
Appointed May 2018, Term Expires 2026

Ken Hoyt | Community of Browning
Appointed March 2020, Term Expires 2028

Tom McKay | Community of Browning
Appointed April 2019, Term Expires 2027

John Overcast | City of Cut Bank
Appointed August 2026, Term Expires 2030

George Heavy Runner | Community of Browning
Appointed August 2026, Term Expires 2030

Mary Jo Bremner | Glacier County Commissioner
Appointed January 2025, Term Expires 2029

Arkaidy Wisniowska | Executive Director
Hired December 2025

2026 Annual Budget

EXPENSE	CATEGORY	FY 2026 BUDGET
Payroll and Payroll Expenses	Payroll	\$31,000.00
Advertising/Donations	Operating	\$1,000.00
Economic Development	Economic Development	\$20,000.00
Rent	Operating	\$2,700.00
Office Expenses	Operating	\$1,000.00
Scholarships	Economic Development	\$1,000.00
Accounting/Legal	Administrative	\$4,500.00
Business Insurance	Administrative	\$3,500.00
Dues, Fees, Subs	Administrative	\$1,000.00
Meeting Expenses	Administrative	\$1,500.00
Travel	Administrative	\$1,000.00
TOTALS		\$68,200.00

Grants In-and-Out Breakdown

Grants GIVEN:

Pikunii Automotive, Cut Bank | \$5,000
For tools and installation of a mechanical car lift

BABBTized Barista, Babb | \$5,000
For a storage shed for product and inventory

Trailhead Saloon, East Glacier Park | \$4,341
For outdoor business signage

Paula's All Occasion Gifts, Browning | Up to \$1,500
(not yet paid out)
For outdoor signage and paint

TOTAL GIVEN: \$15,841

Grants Brought In:

Cut Bank Community Foundation | \$800
For signage and upgrades to Cut Bank Central Park

USDA RBDG | \$32,000
For technical assistance for future Sunset RV expansion project

Reimagining Rural | \$2,000
For Browning beautification

Activate Rural/DoPT | \$50,000
For Cultivate Cut Bank and the activation of creative third spaces

TOTAL BROUGHT IN: \$84,800

Annual Recap by Month

July '25

We started off July strong by awarding two \$500 college scholarships to our selected recipients Trysten Hannon and Mylee Barry.

At this point, we had been working on our revised by-laws and a final draft was ready for approval.

We heard from our two EDF grant applicants (under our old grant program), Latte Da and Pikunii Automotive each requesting \$5,000.

August '25

A very busy and actionable month! We voted on many things.

First, we had put out a call for new board member applicants and this month we invited them all to our meeting to introduce themselves. We were seeking 2 new members. Applicants that joined us included George Heavy Runner, Jade Heather Ackerman, Rachel Kipp, Carrie Taylor, and John Overcast. The board voted unanimously to elect George Heavy Runner as representative of the community of Browning, and John Overcast as representative of the city of Cut Bank.

We voted our new by-laws into action by a full, unanimous board vote.

BABBTized Barista presented their request for a \$5,000 EDF grant.

Voting took place on our 2 EDF grant applicants, Latte Da and Pikunii auto. Pikunii auto was funded for the full \$5,000. Latte Da request was unfortunately denied, although the board was split, a majority vote against carried.

Additionally, we received confirmation that our mill contribution will be \$73,154 and we were able to vote on our proposed budget. Vote was made with no opposition, and the motion carried.

September '25

Newly revised and approved by-laws officially signed by the board.

Due to lack of board representation, most topics tabled until the next meeting.

A Strategic Plan draft was handed out, a result of months of discussion, planning, and board feedback.

October '25

This month we voted on BABbtized Barista's EDF grant request of \$5,000. The board approved the request with a split vote, majority carried.

This would be the last grant given out under the old EDF grant standards. The board voted 5 to 1 to adopt the new Grant-Back Loan program that we had been working through for months.

Arkaidy reported on her experience attending the MEDA conference in Polson.

A vote was taken on the new "Business Start-Up Package", which lends basic start-up assistance such as business plan writing, logo design, etc. to new local businesses. Vote was in favor and the motion carried.

November '25

We received a grant for \$800 from the new Cut Bank Community Foundation to purchase signage and upgrades to Cut Bank's Central Park.

This month marked 1 year since we started the Business of the Week campaign. The program has been an excellent tool that combines marketing, community support, and business promotion.

December '25

The FINAL version of our new Strategic Plan was unanimously voted into action at this meeting.

Furthermore, the FINAL version of our NEW Grant-Back Loan program CONTRACT was voted on unanimously, and the new program will go LIVE January 1st, 2026.

GCED, MSU-Extension, and BPD began to partner on the 2026 Reimagining Rural sessions for Browning. A \$2,000 grant application was submitted for Browning beautification plans. Cut Bank would continue to apply for itself as it had in previous years.

January '26

The new Grant-Back Program was LIVE as of January 1st, and applications for the first cycle opened up.

The Cut Bank Central Park sign project began to take shape, with Arkaidy presenting the board with some possible design options for the new signage which will next be presented to City Council for approval.

Arkaidy met with Opportunity Link in Great Falls and reported to the board on the new partnership.

February '26

This month we launched the 2026 scholarship program, and we were excited to offer financial aid to graduating students in Glacier County.

Rod and Arkaidy presented the Central Park signage drafts to City Council, who liked our idea and design. Waiting for a vote of approval.

USDA grant for Sunset RV park still at a halt at this time due to government shutdowns and funding crisis.

A vote was made to apply for a \$50,000 grant from the Department of Public Transformation. Motion carried.

Discussion of a new hotel project began at this meeting, although no clear direction was defined. Highland Architects out of Billings have shared some usable information on how to proceed.

March '26

Another busy month! We happily announced that the USDA grant for Sunset RV is FINALLY in motion. The first of 3 contractors is actively working on the topographical survey. Such exciting news after a YEAR of waiting!

Chrissy and Aaron Grimm have been in contact with Highland Architects on the hotel project and will be presenting to City Council in April. GCED to write a letter of support, unanimously agreed upon by the board.

The Activate Rural grant application through The Department of Public Transformation has been successfully submitted.

The board voted to purchase a table for the Annual Cut Bank Chamber Banquet in support of this event.

Discussion took place on hiring a grant writer to assist Arkaidy in writing grants. The hours for this position would be taken from Arkaidy's current allotment of 30 hours per week. The board agreed to look for, and interview, a part-time grant writer.

The board also heard from Cycle 1 applicants for the new Grant-Back program. We received 5 applications in total. 4 moved forward with the application process and included Paula Augare, Jonnalea St. Goddard, Fonda Red Fox, and Dawn Gray. George Still Smoking was unable to be reached throughout this process. No votes were made at this time.

April '26

Selections were made for Cycle 1 of the new Grant-Back program. The decision was made unanimously to award Jonnalea St. Goddard of Trailhead Saloon in East Glacier Park the full \$4,341. A secondary vote was made to fund up to \$1,500 for Paula Augare's project.

Cut Bank was selected as a FINALIST for the \$50,000 Activate Rural grant!!

May '26

First Grant-Back contract has been signed and the grant executed. A lot of hard work lead to this.

This year's scholarship applications were not as fruitful. We received only ONE application from Browning High School, and 3 from Cut Bank High School. Anonymous applications were handed out to the board for review.

Arkaidy was very happy to share with the board that our grant application was selected as one of 10 participants (out of 128 applications!!) in the 2026 Activate Rural Learning Cohort Lab. This participation includes a \$50,000 grant and 2 years of program support! The grantees have established a board under the name Cultivate Cut Bank which will run the program. GCED acts as the fiscal agent and Rod and Arkaidy are on the new Cultivate Cut Bank board!

The Cut Bank Central Park project, which is being tackled by multiple organizations, is taking shape. Weeds have been pulled, things planted, gravel added, lights and a mural will be going up. The signage we received grant funding to create is being printed as we speak and will go up on the railing of the park.