



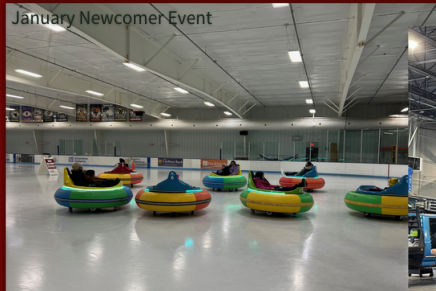
QUARTER 1 REPORT

2024

Mitchell Area Chamber of Commerce

New members

- Lee's Red Barn
- Massage & Wellness Center
- Palace City Thought Partners
- Slumberland Furniture
- Cricket Wireless
- Dakota Family Insurance
- Number Nerd Bookkeeping LLC
- Dailey Law Prof LLC



Ribbon cuttings

- Adventure Awaits Travel
- Massage & Wellness Center
- Mitchell Technical College Diesel Building

1

Agri-Business

Agriculture Seminar

- “**Harvesting Excellence**” (2/27)
 - Featuring speakers from A1 Development Solutions, DSU, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, and local producers.

Ag in the Classroom (3/19)

- Held for area 4th graders to learn about farm animals such as cows, goats, and pigs as well as soil, crops, and the importance of safety around electricity and farm machinery.

2

Government Affairs

Leadership Mitchell

- Session 4 - Business, Industry & City/County Government (1/18)
- Session 5 - State Government & Legislative Session (2/15)
- Session 6 - Technology, Education & Boardmanship (3/21)

Coffee with Legislators (1/26)

State of the Schools Luncheon (2/8)

Mitchell Day at the Legislature (2/15)

Legislative Cracker Barrel (3/1)

3

Connect Mitchell

First Friday Coffee

- Mitchell United Way (1/5)
- Mitchell Rec Center (2/1)

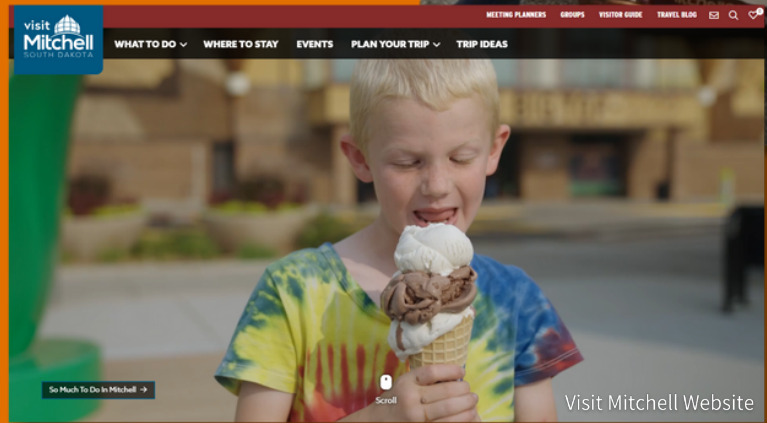
Journey to Success: A Panel on Career Growth (2/20)

Community Concierge hosted Newcomer Events:

- Mitchell Activities Center on 1/17 with 30 guests
- Farm Life Creamery on 2/21 with 13 guests
- DWU Black Box Theatre on 3/22 with 13 guests

WINGO BINGO @ Wingapalooza (3/23)

Mitchell Convention & Visitors Bureau



1

New Interstate Billboards

The billboards on the Interstate-90 advertising for the Corn Palace and the Gift Shop have been in rough shape. The Convention and Visitors Bureau worked with Lamar and Verde to re-do the vinyl on the large billboards, some with new designs. So far, we have improved 5 billboards placed on I-90. The goal of these billboards is to encourage people to stop and see The Corn Palace while spending some time in our community. Our next step is to work on the smaller, privately owned billboards.

2

New Visit Mitchell Website

The brand-new Visit Mitchell website has been completed and is live. It is still the same URL at VisitMitchell.com. The newly launched website has a much more user-friendly interface and visually appealing design, surpassing its predecessor. Its search engine optimization (SEO) has elevated its visibility, positioning it as a top choice in numerous Google searches related to Mitchell. This optimized online presence has correlated with a notable surge in Visitor Guide requests, suggesting a substantial uptick in traffic to the revamped website.

3

2024 National Pheasant Fest

Representatives from the CVB and the Corn Palace Gift Shop were present at the 2024 National Pheasant Fest & Quail Classic on March 1-3 in Sioux Falls. This event set the record for the most attendees at a Pheasant Fest with almost 35,000 people. Mitchell was represented well, and many conversations were held about the potential of hunting in Mitchell or just coming back to check out the Corn Palace. Promotional items were handed out to patrons and were very popular. The CVB and the Gift Shop will be attending next year in Kansas City.

Mitchell Area Development Corporation

Workforce Development

Incentive Program

- Our first Move to Mitchell Relocation \$1,000 Grant Incentive Program ended in December of 2023, in which \$25,000 was awarded to 26 new employees working for 20 employers. The newcomers came from 12 different states and 2 countries.
- Because of the success of the first Move to Mitchell Relocation \$1,000 Grant Incentive Program, the MADC board allocated another \$25,000 to the program. Applications for the second round of funding opened on March 1, 2024.
- We have awarded 3 - \$1,000 incentives to out-of-state workers with the 2nd round of funding.

Workforce Wednesday Hiring Events

- MADC partnered with the South Dakota Department of Labor for our first Virtual Job Fair on January 31. There were 8 businesses with 35 open positions and 26 registered attendees. Roughly 50% of the attendees had out-of-state contact information.
- MADC partnered with the South Dakota Department of Labor for our 2nd Drive-Through Hiring event. Nineteen employers participated in the March 20th drive-through hiring event near the Corn Palace. 125 bags containing information on open positions and swag were handed out.

Marketing

- MADC continues to make creative and entertaining workforce videos that are getting a lot of attention and have attracted more employers and job candidates than we've had previously.

Workforce Housing

- MADC was successful with two grants from the South Dakota Housing Development Authority.
- HOME Grant \$200,000
- HOF Grant \$123,750
- These two grants will be used for housing rehab projects in the Mitchell area. The housing rehab grants are funded through a Federal HUD Program and are income-based award programs. We currently have 8 applications/projects. Last year, our average project cost was around \$13,000.
- Ridgeview on Forster Plat passed both Planning and Zoning and City Council.
- We met with Northwestern Energy to expand gas infrastructure for both of our housing developments and our new industrial park.



Incentive Program



Drive-Through Hiring Event



Housing Rehab Project

Mitchell Area Development Corporation

Business Recruitment/Retention

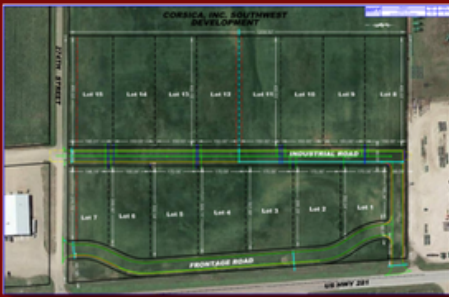
- Conducted another round of BRE (Business Recruitment and Expansion) visits. These visits are through a partnership with the Governor's Office of Economic Development, Northwestern Energy, Central Electric Coop, and the South Dakota Department of Labor. These business "health checkups" are to help our local businesses grow, expand, and solve problems. This round included LifeQuest, Firesteel Healthcare Center, Puetz Corporation, POET Bioprocessing, Trail-Eze, and Enertech Global LLC. Employers were very interested in the South Dakota Department of Labor Apprenticeship Program. Ezra Hunter, Apprenticeship Program coordinator, attended the BRE visits and is working with local businesses to start new apprenticeship programs in Mitchell.
- Key Concerns shared:
 - Employee recruitment
 - Housing shortage
 - Daycare need
 - High-interest rates
 - Lack of restaurant options
- Met with new and expanding business prospects.
 - We have expanded our focus to retail recruitment with an emphasis on restaurants.
 - Hosted four business prospects with one confirmed relocation.



Community Development/MISC

- In partnership with Central Electric, we applied for a USDA Rural Economic Development Loan (REDLG). Central Electric is the applicant for a \$2 Million Loan at 0% interest. We completed the Environmental Assessment and submitted the grant application for the March 2024 deadline to be considered in the August 2024 funding round. If we are successful, these funds will be used for the purchase and development of a 20-acre industrial park.
- We hosted the Deputy Commissioner and staff of the South Dakota Governor's Office of Economic Development to promote Mitchell and share the different projects that we are currently working on. They presented to our board the programs they offer and what the future focus of GOED looks like.
- We continue to work with DWU and the Secretary of State's office on an economic report that is expected to be published in May 2024. Met with South Dakota Secretary of State Monae Johnson and Dakota Wesleyan University Economics Professor Tracy Dice to discuss the joint effort in publishing an Economic Report based on economic indicators in the Mitchell, SD area. We will be using business filing data provided by the SD Secretary of State's office. Economic Students from Dakota Wesleyan University under the guidance of Economics Professor Tracy Dice have been gathering and analyzing data to produce the report. Not only is this a hands-on learning experience for the students, but it also provides the Mitchell Area Development Corporation with information about the local economy, giving insight to decision-makers.
- We were invited and attended the Governor's Office of Economic Development strategy planning session to help guide their vision for South Dakota's future.
- Filmed and promoted the City of Mitchell water infrastructure expansion project, which will double the City's water capacity in 2027.
- The Mitchell Area Chamber of Commerce, Mitchell Area Development Corporation, Northwestern Energy and Dakota Wesleyan University are jointly sponsoring a free Workforce Retention Summit on Thursday, April 18, in the School of Business, Innovation and Leadership on the DWU campus.
- Worked in partnership with the City of Mitchell to develop a "Sales Tax Rebate Incentive Program" to help recruit new businesses to the Mitchell area. The City Council passed this resolution unanimously.

Dakota Heartland Development Association



Corsica/Armour Day at the Legislature



1

Business Development

CORSICA-

- Assisted in obtaining \$500,000 grant funding for infrastructure for Southwest Business Park.
- Funding from a GOED LIIP Grant assists funding a new \$2million, 15-Lot business park along US 281 South of Corsica.
- Other Funding includes East River REED Loan, Dakota Resources Loan, Corsica Development and City TIF.

2

Childcare

PARKSTON/TRIPP & CORSICA/ARMOUR -

- Received In-depth third-party childcare study results for communities in Hutchinson and Douglas Counties.
- Funded partially through Northwestern Energy grant, the Studies show significant shortage of Childcare for 0-2 yrs. of age now and in the next 5 years.
- Projected shortages for ages 2-5 year olds and after school youth also identified.

3

Advocacy

CORSICA / ARMOUR -

- Attended South Dakota Legislature to thank them for their service and assistance.
- Corsica received a GOED LIIP Grant for \$500,000 for business park infrastructure.
- Armour received a South Dakota Housing Infrastructure Grant for \$675,000 for their 37-Lot Housing Subdivision.
- Corsica and Armour Development Corp. members served five styles of Dakota Tom Sandwiches, chips, a beverage and sweet treats to all our legislators and their staff members.