

Commerce



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North Dakota Tourism Industry Newsletter

July 13, 2021



2020 Main Street Tourism Grant recipient hosts ribbon-cutting event

The Nome Schoolhouse recently opened the doors to a new event center and fiber arts business that spanned three years in the works.

The schoolhouse project was awarded \$10,000 from the 2020 Main Street Tourism Grant to help restore the school that now provides lodging, business, and event space for the community of Nome and surrounding areas in and around Barnes County.



<https://youtu.be/2A97EuvQm7Q>

Learn more

More than \$3.4 million awarded to businesses that continue to experience the impact of COVID-19

The application windows for The Event and Support Services Grant (ESSG) and the Tour Operators Grant (TATO) are now closed. As of recently:

- 28 applications were approved for the ESSG with an overall total of \$2 million funds awarded.
- 24 applications were approved for the TATO with an approximate overall total of \$1.4 million funds awarded. An additional application is currently in review.



Registration opens for the 2021 Main Street ND Summit

The 2021 Main Street ND Summit begins the evening of Oct. 11 with a free pre-summit event and continues on Oct. 12 at 8 a.m. at the Rustad Recreation Center in West Fargo. Both in-person and virtual options are available to those wishing to attend.

“The Main Street ND Summit is a great opportunity to network with leaders at all levels and share ideas on how to create healthy, vibrant communities with smart, efficient infrastructure that can attract a 21st century workforce. We’re grateful for all those who participate and for their dedication to enhancing their local communities and leading our state to its highest potential.” – Gov. Doug Burgum

This year's theme, Smart, Efficient, Infrastructure will provide insight into both the physical elements of infrastructure and the critical needs to grow a next-generation community with economic development, workforce and leadership development.

Key highlights will include an engaging experience with [Urban 3](#) and the innovative outcomes of their North Dakota study. Additionally, Charles Marohn from [Strong Towns](#) will share his research and valuable insight on making stronger and more financially resilient communities.

[Register here](#)

Do you know of an outstanding community or project? Make a nomination for the 2021 Main Street Awards

The Main Street Awards are a collaborative effort of the Office of Governor and the North Dakota Department of Commerce. A selection committee made up of the collaborating agencies and partners judge the entries to make final awards, which will be presented at the Main Street ND Summit on Oct. 12 in West Fargo, North Dakota.

A promotional banner for the Main Street ND Awards 2021. The background is a photograph of a city street with buildings and a clear sky. On the left, there is a green semi-transparent overlay with the text 'Nominate a project or community today!'. In the center and right, there are three white boxes with green text listing award categories: 'ND Legendary Heritage', 'Main Street Excellence', '21st Century Workforce', 'Healthy, Vibrant Community', and 'Smart, Efficient Infrastructure'. At the bottom, there is a dark green bar with the text 'MAIN STREET ND' in large white letters and 'AWARDS 2021' in smaller white letters below it.

Nominate a project or community today!

ND Legendary Heritage

Main Street Excellence

21st Century Workforce

Healthy, Vibrant Community

Smart, Efficient Infrastructure

MAIN STREET ND

AWARDS 2021

Nominate today



McKenzie County launches augmented reality wayfinding and gamification

McKenzie County Tourism announces the launch of Yondar, a web-based product that allows visitors to explore area attractions via augmented reality wayfinding. This revolutionary tool, built by InnovatAR, a North Dakota-based tech firm, helps visitors navigate outdoor attractions and unlock prizes for visiting points of interest.

Yondar is available in downtown Watford City, at Tobacco Gardens Marina & Resort, and in the North Unit of Theodore Roosevelt National Park. Utilizing the capabilities of smartphones, Yondar allows visitors to easily find friends, family and points of interest. With a nimble user interface and no need to download an app, users can quickly begin exploring via a 2D map or in 3D space with augmented reality.

"We're absolutely thrilled to launch this innovative, high-tech experience for our visitors. This community strives to be on the forefront of growth and exploration, and that includes technology. We have so much to offer guests, and this new tool provides an opportunity to discover the Watford City area in their own way and on their own time."—McKenzie County Tourism Director Doug Bolken

Yondar is equipped with gamification that allows users to track their progress and unlock prizes from the Visitor Center. Users can also send a private link to friends and family, then instantly share location data and stay connected while touring the county.

In addition to enhancing the onsite visitor experience, a desktop experience is available at visitwatfordcity.com/VirtualTours. This online tool showcases photos, videos, and immersive 360-degree tours of scenic attractions.

To use Yondar when visiting McKenzie County, go to the following links:

- Watford City: yondar.me/watford
- Tobacco Gardens: yondar.me/tobaccogardens
- Theodore Roosevelt National park: yondar.me/trnp

Watch a demonstration

Postcard Jar explores North Dakota



North Dakota Tourism recently hosted Steve and Ann Teget of [Postcard Jar](#). They had a packed itinerary that routed them through a number of legendary experiences in the eastern part of the state.

Influencers play an integral role in our marketing and communications efforts and the results continue to prove valuable in encouraging potential visitors to the state.

Here is a quick social media recap of their trip with three blog posts to follow in the upcoming months.

Instagram

- 400+ Instagram Stories reaching more than 825,000 users
- 542 interactions
- 325 replies

Instagram and Facebook posts

- 11 posts reaching more than 130,000 users
- Average engagement rate of 546 per post





Lewis & Clark Interpretive Center and Fort Mandan Transfer to State Historical Society of North Dakota

As of July 1, 2021, the State Historical Society of North Dakota is managing the North Dakota Lewis & Clark Interpretive Center and Fort Mandan State Historic Site in Washburn. Both properties were formerly managed by the North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department until a change in the state's century code was enacted by the 2021 State Legislative Assembly. Visiting hours, public tours, and services at each site remain the same.

With the addition of these two sites, the State Historical Society now manages 59 museums and historic sites across North Dakota.

“We’re excited to add these significant places to our historic sites management. They will help us complete our story of the history of this region from around 1400 to today using the Missouri River as a narrative channel. We look forward to working with the Washburn community to enhance tourism and commerce.” – state Historical Society Director Bill Peterson.

Find more information about the Lewis & Clark Interpretive Center, Fort Mandan, 57 additional state historic sites, and upcoming activities and rental opportunities at history.nd.gov/sites.



Upcoming events

[ESTO](#) – Aug. 15-17 in Los Angeles, California

[IPW](#) – Sept. 18-22 in Las Vegas, Nevada

[Main Street ND Summit](#) – Oct. 12 in West Fargo

Travel Industry Conference – Oct. 25-26 in Bismarck



In the News



[North Dakotans hit the road, find higher gas prices](#)



[Canadian border restrictions easing](#)



[Fort Abraham Lincoln State Park to host living history event](#)



[Watchable Wildlife photo contest offers opportunity to enjoy a pastime that's always in season](#)