



**SPEARFISH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

**BUSINESS  
NEWSLETTER**



Volume 8, Issue 10 | October 2023

# Workforce Development Summit

*Registration Open!*

# SPEARFISH

Economic Development Corporation



## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SUMMIT

*-Modern Solutions For Today's Workforce Challenges-*

**October 24th, 2023**

**8 AM - 2 PM**

**BHSU Joy Center**

**SPONSORED BY:**

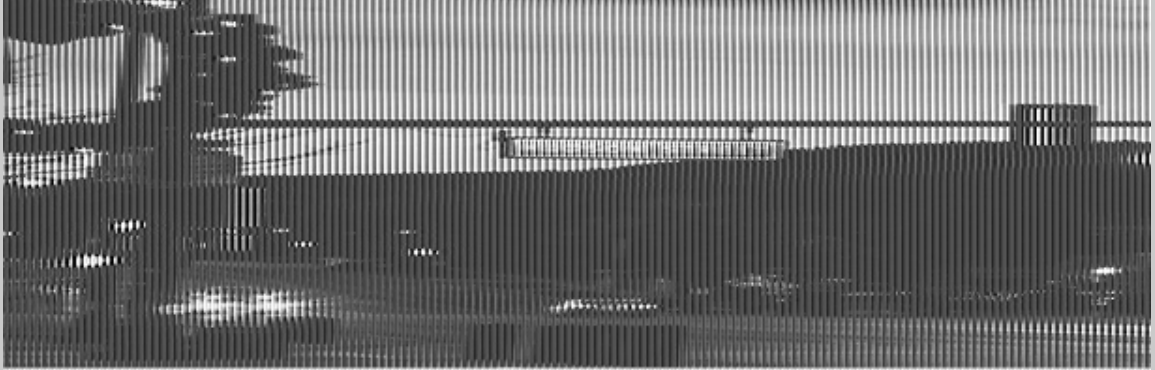
**BLACK HILLS**  
COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



Join us for a free educational discussion on key aspects of workforce development and modern strategies for large and small businesses!

[Register](#)

## City of Spearfish Comprehensive Plan Open House



## CITY OF SPEARFISH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE OCTOBER 18TH

The City of Spearfish is currently in the process of updating its Comprehensive Plan. This update will provide a vision and guiding principles for the future of Spearfish. The plan will cover a range of topics, including transportation, housing, recreation, energy, zoning, infrastructure, facilities, and cultural needs. The update will be a key document in the City's strategic planning process.

### EVENT DETAILS

The event will be held on Wednesday, October 18th, from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the W.S. Tretheway Pavilion in City Park. The event is open to all residents and interested parties. The agenda includes a presentation by the City Council, a public comment period, and a Q&A session with city officials.

All are invited to an open house from 5:30-7:30 p.m. Wednesday, October 18th at the W.S. Tretheway Pavilion in City Park regarding the City of Spearfish Comprehensive Plan Update. The City is starting the process to update its comprehensive plan, which is a policy document articulating the community's vision and priorities and guiding decision-making for the future of Spearfish. The plan will cover a range of topics, including transportation, housing, recreation, energy, zoning, infrastructure, facilities, and cultural needs

[Event Details](#)



SPEARFISH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

**BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT** 

# SYNLawn Mountain West

**Joe Makoutz**

*Chief Visionary Officer/Owner*

*Facebook: SYNLawn Mountain West*

*Website: SYNLawn Mountain West*



**What is your background/How did you get involved in this business?**

*It all began in 2003 while Joe Makoutz (owner/operator) was working at Hart Ranch Golf Course injecting water into the greens to repair damaged spots and thinking.. There must be a better way. Then, driven by the need to find the best alternative, he conducted extensive amounts of research and personal product testing, and finally chose to partner with SYNLawn.*

**What inspired the start of your business?**

*Spreading our passion for sustainable, environmental, kid and pet friendly systems.*

**What does a typical day at your business look like?**

*Responding to contractor questions, advising architects, general contractors and design firms on project specs and best practices, navigating day to day operations of ordering products and scheduling installations or onsite consultations, educating prospective customers on the best options for their application, relationship building with our clients and industry partners, and consulting with advocacy groups on environmental or sustainability issues relatable to our industry.*

**What is one thing people may not know about your business?**

*AstroTurf is our sister company that focuses on the sports side and SYNLawn focuses on the*

**What are some of the most popular products or services that you sell or provide?**

*The possibilities are endless. SYNLawn artificial grass is used for lawns and landscapes, municipals, roadway medians, dog parks, playgrounds, golf and art. We serve residential customers and commercial contractors with product fulfillment and design services.*

**What opportunities do you see for your business's future?**

*We are already creating technology for 2024 and 2025 to constantly work to provide a better system and solutions for our applications and are actively working to scale our business to meet the growing demand across our territory.*

**If you could go back in time, knowing what you know now, is there anything you would do differently in regard to your business?**

*The hardest thing we hear, "I wish I would have known about you before". So we plan to greatly reduce that comment and allow people to know that we exist if they feel turf may be a good fit for their needs.*

**What is the nicest thing a customer has ever said to you about your business?**

*Typically, it is not just what our customers say, but rather what they do. Their smile when they*

recreational side of the turf world. However, we still offer sport court surfacing for smaller applications.

### **What makes your business unique?**

*Turf is not for everyone nor every application. Our jobs are to educate people that turf may or may not be an option for their needs. This way, the customer will be informed to make the decision if turf is right for them.*

### **Where is your business located?**

*We are a business that comes to you, but we do have operations in based in South Dakota, Wyoming and Montana to allow our customers the ability to touch and feel the products first-hand, while also providing one-on-one consultations and educational information on a smart alternative to natural grass. In South Dakota we work with a select group of contractors across the state to install our products; in Montana and Wyoming, we have our own installation crews and consultants dedicated to covering each state.*

### **When did your business start operating in the Spearfish area?**

*Now, celebrating our 20th year in the industry, we're still operating where our roots began, right here in the Black Hills and surrounding areas, and have grown to encompass the rest of South Dakota, Wyoming and Montana region. We currently have 14 team members at SYNLaw Mountain West and we will be adding additional members in Spring 2024.*

### **What do you enjoy most about doing business in Spearfish?**

*Spearfish has a small-town feel with a big heart. There is always pride in ownership and willingness to work together for a common goal.*

*are proud of their space, the kids playing and doing cartwheels, the dogs running, the golfer sinking their putt.*

### **What is the mission of your business?**

*Transforming ordinary places... Into extraordinary spaces.*

### **What is your business's motto/slogan?**

*Our vision: Making a positive impact with our team, our customers, and our communities.*

### **How does your business give back to the Spearfish Community?**

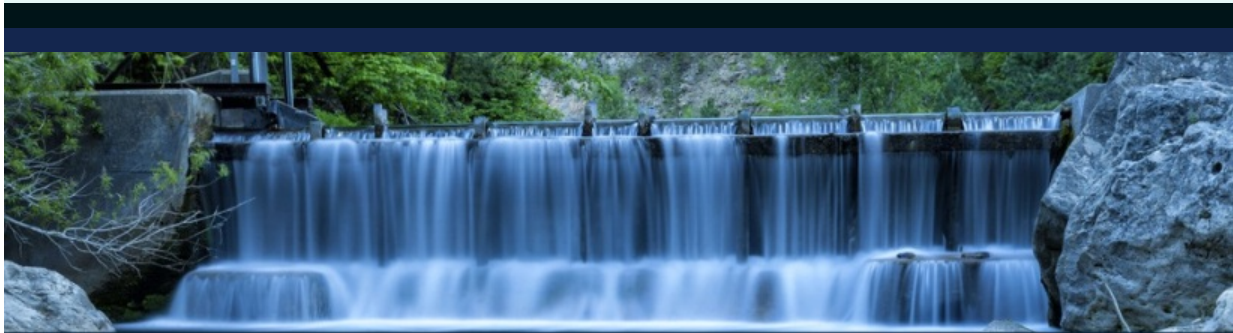
*We always aim to leave a positive impact in any community we work in.*

### **Is there anything else about you or your business that you would like to share?**

*SYNLawn has developed multiple varieties of synthetic grasses, which are specifically designed for landscape, playground, pet, golf, and field applications. Working directly with landscapers, architects and the customer to develop the best sustainable solution for your needs. Our "Do It Yourself" (DIY) training program teaches you how install our products on your own. Synthetic lawns are a very innovative and new idea to many people. Our team is here to help educate you on the benefits our products have to offer and ease any fears of the unknown.*



*\*If you are interested in being featured as SEDC's business spotlight, please email [office@spearfishdevelopment.com](mailto:office@spearfishdevelopment.com) for more information.*



**SPEARFISH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

# THE MORE YOU KNOW

## Five Retention Strategies for 2023

HRO | Claudine Hoverson

Changes in employee expectations of the workplace began with the global pandemic and will continue into 2023. The hybrid work from home model replaced the old way of working and it's here to stay. This shift to hybrid work shows that employers can be flexible, and employees are open to change. This new paradigm presents HR leaders with opportunities to evaluate their current practices and continue to find creative ways to attract top talent and improve employee retention and engagement.

For many companies, work will never look the same. Some business leaders who had long thought remote workers would be disengaged and less productive outside of the office are realizing the opposite

is true. Synchrony's company survey revealed 90% of the workforce wanted a more permanent work from home arrangement.

Before the pandemic, remote work was a rare exception. Now employees have great flexibility in how, when, and where they work. Employees who want to work at home have the option to do so while the company ensures they can still come together for purposeful interactions. As a result, employees report feeling more engaged and more productive.

Here are five management strategies for HR leaders to truly reap the benefits of what's been learned over the last few years.



### **1. Cultivate trust and accountability.**

In a hybrid work environment, HR leaders should reconsider how they evaluate employee productivity and performance measurement. The emphasis should move from managing to coaching and building performance management models that encourage candid conversations, provide continuous feedback, offer clear expectations on goals and outcomes, validate that employees are on track, and encourage self-directed employee improvement. Now more than ever, employees need to be empowered to make the right decisions, accelerating innovation and nimbleness.

### **2. Build a corporate culture that focuses on keeping employees.**

In today's competitive hiring market, employee retention has become a top priority for HR leaders. According to a recent Fortune/Deloitte CEO survey, workers are in the position to find jobs that meet their needs professionally and also from a work/life perspective. Workers have evolving expectations about what they want from their employers, and businesses need to listen.

Building employee feedback mechanisms is key to understanding what employees are thinking and finding out how best to support them. Armed with this insight, organizations can start testing out strategies to meet their needs in concert with the needs of the business. For example, Synchrony developed a series of new employee offerings co-designed with employees, including flexible work options for all, opening up job opportunities across all locations, and removing degree requirements from nearly 90% of roles to attract more diverse candidates. All of these innovative programs have led to an estimated 30% increase in new employee applications, which indicate an agile approach of listening, iterating, and adapting works.

### **3. Support employee well-being.**

Employee well-being is an important area where companies need to continue to invest. Employees value the ability to continue working while caring for themselves and their families without worrying about

sacrificing one or the other. To help address employee burnout, focus on implementing mental health support programs; offering access to diverse wellness coaches; allowing for sabbaticals; providing financial counseling; and sharing resources for caregivers.

#### 4. Improve childcare options.

Working mothers and other caregivers have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic and continue to balance a tremendous amount between working and caring for their children.

A recent report by LeanIn.org and McKinsey & Company found that women leaders are leaving companies at the highest rates ever. And a Marshall Plan for Moms report found that expanded childcare benefits from employers is a deciding factor as to whether to stay on the job.

Business leaders can play a larger role to help solve America's childcare crisis and better support working parents by enhancing childcare options. For example, at Synchrony, hourly employees and women represent the majority of the workforce so employees have the option for backup childcare for up to 60 days, a program they can access on short notice. Paid parental leave includes expanded maternity leave for up to 22 weeks for birth parents. There is also an initiative around working with The Mom Project on supporting caregivers who left during the pandemic and are returning to the workforce.

#### 5. Leverage the Metaverse.

The hybrid model of working means that employers must develop creative ways to continually engage, support, and train managers and employees. Metaverse tools, such as augmented and virtual reality, provide the opportunity for managers to learn and collaborate in a virtual environment. For example, Synchrony is piloting a virtual reality training program and building 3D replicas of collaboration spaces that will help train managers to be better leaders, run more effective meetings, and have critical conversations.

The hybrid model isn't going to be perfect, yet. It takes work, experimentation, and continual listening to drive purpose-driven outcomes. Adopting a coaching mindset and supporting employees via creative solutions will help leaders be more effective.

The pandemic has taught organizations that everything about corporate life could be different. Rather than go backwards, HR leaders should seize this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to rethink traditional employer/employee relationships and make life more rewarding for all.



[Learn More](#)

## \$1K Workforce Incentive - Final Applications Due By Nov. 1

Business seeking to utilize the \$1,000 Workforce Incentive to supplement recruiting efforts for out-of-state workers must submit applications by November 1, 2023 to be eligible



# BY THE NUMBERS

## SD DEPT. OF LABOR REPORTS:

### SPEARFISH CITY REPORTS:

BUILDING PERMITS	2023	2022	YTD 2023	YTD 2022
New Residential	8	10	64	102
New Commercial	2	0	12	13
Total Permits	38	31	259	327
Total Dollars	\$15,534,619	\$7,873,219	\$77,285,427	\$84,700,266

SALES TAX	2023	2022	YTD 2023	YTD 2022
2nd Cent Sales Tax	\$648,800	\$625,414	\$4,549,303	\$4,345,442
Hospitality Tax	\$132,863	\$118,290	\$686,998	\$667,764

BUILDING PERMITS AND SALES TAX ARE BASED ON THE MOST RECENT CITY OF SPERFISH REPORTS FROM SEPTEMBER 2023

Labor Force	2023	2022
<b>CITY OF SPEARFISH</b>		
Total Labor force	6,877	6,808
Total Employed	6,747	6,666
Total Unemployed	130	142
% Unemployed	1.9%	2.1%

<b>LAWRENCE COUNTY</b>		
Total Labor force	14,705	14,571
Total Employed	14,429	14,257
Total Unemployed	276	314
% Unemployed	1.9%	2.2%

<b>NORTHERN HILLS (BUTTE, LAWRENCE, MEADE, &amp; PENNINGTON COUNTIES)</b>		
Total Labor force	97,412	97,280
Total Employed	95,539	95,152
Total Unemployed	1,874	2,128
% Unemployed	1.9%	2.2%

LABOR FORCE DATA IS BASED ON THE MOST RECENT SD DEPARTMENT OF LABOR & REGULATION REPORT FROM AUGUST 2023



## Legislative News Updates

[Spearfish Sets Budget For 2023](#)

[Thune Leads Colleagues In Protecting Telehealth Services](#)

[Rounds Introduces Bills To Enhance Cyber Resources For Rural Communities](#)

[BHSU Reports Enrollment Increase](#)

[Johnson Team Accepts Constituent Service Award](#)

[Lt. Governor Rhoden, DANR and SD Trade Kick Off Trade Mission To Mexico](#)



## Local Development News

[Family-Owned Jitter Joint Play Café To Bring Indoor Playground And Coffee Shop To Downtown Spearfish](#)

[Spearfish Veterans Monument Committee Thanks Spearfish Motors For Support](#)

[Celebrating Community And Fine Beverages At Spearfish Creek Wine Bar](#)

[BHSU Reports Enrollment Increase](#)

[LBNF Excavation 80% Complete; Fermilab Ramps Up Hiring Efforts](#)

[Black Hills State University Bike Rental Program Launches To Promote Wellness And Exploration](#)

[A Journey In Java](#)

[Scientists Stress Importance Of Institute For Underground Science At SURF](#)



## Get Involved In The Community!

### Women's Business Summit

Thursday | October 19

9 AM - 4 PM

The Box Event Center

Box Elder

[Learn More Here](#)

### NH CASA Dueling Pianos

Friday | October 27

5:30 PM

The Barn At Aspen Acres

[Learn More Here](#)

### SEDC Workforce Development Summit

Tuesday | October 24

8 AM - 2 PM

BHSU Joy Center

[Learn More Here](#)

# Share The News!

Keep your employees informed on local business happenings by sharing this email and/or previous newsletters with them!

SEDC Newsletter Archives



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