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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**CITIES, COUNTIES FORM “GREATER FARGO MOORHEAD EDC”
Expanded Economic Development Focus to Provide Regional Benefits**

Fargo, N.D. (May 18, 2005) – The Greater Fargo Moorhead Economic Development Corporation (GFMEDC) officially formed today, expanding the focus of the former Fargo Cass County EDC to include Moorhead and Clay County, Minn. The expanded organization now represents two counties, 38 cities and more than 150 private-sector investors.

GFMEDC, Clay County and Moorhead officials signed service contracts to formalize the new relationships following the organization’s annual Report to Investors meeting. Leaders from both sides of the Red River said the GFMEDC will enhance economic development and marketing of the area as a whole.

“Good jobs in Fargo and Cass County benefit citizens of Moorhead and Clay County and vice versa. The Greater Fargo Moorhead EDC will continue to focus on improving and diversifying the economy through growth in primary-sector jobs, but now we will be able to leverage all our strengths to grow total employment throughout the extended community,” said Richard Solberg, chair of the GFMEDC Board of Directors.

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“This marks the beginning of a new era of cooperation that makes a great deal of sense for our region,” said Cass County Commission Chair Darrell Vanyo. “We gain real competitive advantages by marketing the whole community instead of just part of it.”

The federal government already lists Fargo and Moorhead together in a single metropolitan statistical area (MSA). For marketing purposes, the combined communities are the largest MSA in North Dakota and the third largest in Minnesota. In addition, according to GFMEDC President Brian Walters, the combined communities often are more attractive to prospective companies and site selectors in areas such as labor availability, technology capabilities and education quality.

“We’ve been working on this for some time, and saw what was possible when we looked across the river,” said Clay County Commission Chair Ben Brunsvold. “The very best possible outcome for us was to form a community-wide economic development effort. We’re thrilled to be involved.”

“We look forward to the enhanced collaboration the Greater Fargo Moorhead EDC represents and the benefits that will result,” added Moorhead Mayor Mark Voxland. “Rather than being an arbitrary divider, the Red River is now an artery that binds the economic futures of our communities.”

On April 20, the FCCEDC Board of Directors amended the organization's articles of incorporation and by-laws, approved contracts to provide marketing and business recruitment, retention and expansion services to Moorhead and Clay County, and voted to change the organization's name. The Moorhead and Clay County commissions approved the new relationships on May 2 and May 10, respectively.

The GFMEDC's corporate structure remains the same, and it continues to operate as a nonprofit North Dakota corporation. Six new directors will be added to the board: one each for the city of Moorhead and Clay County, the Moorhead school superintendent, the presidents of Minnesota State University Moorhead and Concordia College, and a representative of a second Clay County city appointed by the board chair.

The GFMEDC strives to enhance economies in Cass County, N.D. and Clay County, Minn. communities by attracting, expanding and retaining primary-sector businesses. Its primary objective is to facilitate the creation of primary-sector jobs. A primary-sector business is one that brings new dollars into a community through the sale of its products and services outside of the trade area. The primary sector is the foundation of an economy and the principal driver of economic development.