

MONTANA RURAL DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS, INC.



Rural Resource Team Report

**Forsyth, Montana
Rosebud County
October 1, 2, & 3, 2002**

MT RDP Mission

As our Mission, the Montana Rural Development Partners, Inc. is committed to supporting locally conceived strategies to sustain, improve, and develop vital and prosperous rural Montana communities by encouraging communication, coordination, and collaboration among private, public and tribal groups.

THE MONTANA RURAL DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS, INC.

The Montana Rural Development Partners, Inc. is a collaborative public/private partnership that brings together six partner groups: local government, state government, federal government, tribal governments, non-profit organizations and private sector individuals and organizations.

An Executive Committee representing the six partner groups governs MT RDP, INC. The Executive Committee as well as the Partners' membership has established the following goals for the MT RDP, Inc.:

- Assist rural communities in visioning and strategic planning
- Serve as a resource for assisting communities in finding and obtaining grants for rural projects
- Serve and be recognized as a neutral forum for identification and resolution of multi-jurisdictional issues.

The Partnership seeks to assist rural Montana communities with their needs and development efforts by matching the technical and financial resources of federal, state, and local governments and the private sector with locally conceived strategies/efforts.

If you would like more information about the Montana Rural Development Partners, Inc. and how you may benefit as a member, contact:

Gene Vuckovich, Executive Director
Montana Rural Development Partners, Inc.
118 East Seventh Street; Suite 2A
Anaconda, Montana 59711

Ph: 406.563.5259
Fax: 406.563.5476

genev@mtrdp.org
<http://www.mtrdp.org>

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The elements are all here for Forsyth to have a successful future. To become a growing, vibrant community takes people willing to roll up their sleeves and go to work. Once this nucleus begins to exert effort, it will begin to show some successes. Then this nucleus needs to expand to include more and more of the community until the entire community is involved. But the work is not on the big jobs; it is on small ones that can be achieved quickly. The big ones come later after Forsyth has seen the results of the smaller efforts and sees that it can accomplish things.

There is a number of short-term, accomplishable recommendations that the resource team has provided. The most important thing is to get the entire community involved in trying to find ways to accomplish its goals. A few celebrations at the successful conclusion of an activity that has involved a large number of citizens will lead to a feeling of accomplishment that will carry over into other activities. Look through the suggestions, pick out one, and get started!

Each of you individually must decide what it is that you want to do—what kind of project you want to tackle. There are enough tasks for everyone. Each small step, every accomplishment, no matter how limited, is movement in the right direction toward achieving Forsyth's goals. It can be done! There is no problem-facing Forsyth that cannot be solved by the people living in the community. It is your choice, your decision; you can do it. The Montana Rural Development Partners, Inc. can only help you to help yourself.

On behalf of the Forsyth Resource Team, I want to thank the community and our sponsors, Mayor Dennis Kopitzke, City and County Governments, for the warm hospitality shown to us during our stay. The meals and accommodations were outstanding and certainly deserve a gold star from this team! We heard over and over in the listening sessions that Forsyth, has great people and we can certainly attest to that! Thank you very much.

We hope you will find great value in this report and remember, any team member is available for you to call to clarify or provide more information and assistance. Use these folks!

The Montana Rural Development Partners, Inc. is here to help you in any way we can.

Sincerely,

Gene Vuckovich

PROCESS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THIS REPORT

The Montana Rural Development Partners, Inc. has provided a resource team to assist the community of Forsyth, Montana in evaluating the community's assets and liabilities and in developing suggestions for improving the environment, social and economic future of Forsyth.

The City of Forsyth requested a community assessment from the Montana Rural Development Partners, Inc. Forsyth's Mayor, Dennis Kopitzke, and his staff served as the community contacts and took the lead in agenda development, logistics and publicity for the assessment. Resource team members were selected to visit, interview citizens, business and community leaders; and develop a plan of recommended action for the city. The team members were carefully selected based on their fields of expertise that Forsyth officials indicated would be needed to respond to the problem areas identified.

The Resource Team toured the city and interviewed approximately 200 people over a three-day period from October 1 - 3, 2002. The team interviewed representatives from the following segments of the Forsyth community: Agriculture, Government and Law Enforcement, Churches, Youth, Educators, Retail Businesses, Utilities, Banking and Financial Institutions, Healthcare, Civic Clubs, and Seniors. Each participant was asked to respond to three questions designed to begin communications and discussion and to serve as a basis for developing the action plan. The three questions were:

- What do you think are the major problems and challenges in Forsyth?
- What do you think are the major strengths and assets in Forsyth?
- What projects would you like to see completed in two, five, ten and twenty years in Forsyth?

Upon completion of the interviews, the team met to compare notes and share comments following the three days of intense study. The team then agreed that each team member would carefully analyze the things said, synthesize what they heard with their knowledge of programs and resources, prepare their notes and suggestions, and forward these items to be combined into MT RDP's final report to Forsyth.

A preliminary oral report and a summary of group recommendations was presented to the people of Forsyth on October 3, 2002 and many of the citizens of Forsyth who participated in the interviews were in attendance.

Following the oral report, a formal written report was prepared and presented to the community of Forsyth. It was agreed that the Community would print copies or summaries for each person interviewed.

RESOURCE TEAM MEMBERS

<p>Forsyth Team Leader: Gene Vuckovich Title: Executive Director Agency: MT RDP Address: 118 E. Seventh St.; Suite 2A City/State/Zip: Anaconda, MT 59711 Ph: 406.563.5259 Fx: 406.563.5476 Email: genev@mtrdp.org Web: www.mtrdp.org</p>	<p>Forsyth Team Member: Lee Boyer Title: Bureau Chief Agency: Dept of Ag/Rural Dev Address: P.O. Box 200201 City/State/Zip: Helena, MT 59620-0201 Ph: 406.444.2402 Fx: 406.444.5409 Email: lboyer@state.mt.us Web: www.agr.state.mt.us</p>
<p>Forsyth Team Member: Kathy Kaufman Title: Community Dev Manager Agency: USDA/RD Address: 1629 Ave. D; Bldg A #6 City/State/Zip: Billings, MT 59102 Ph: 406.657.6297 x 4 Fx: 406.657.6294 Email: Kathy.Kaufman@mtbillings.fsc.usda.gov Web: www.rurdev.usda.gov/mt</p>	<p>Forsyth Team Member: Nick Rich Title: CDBG Prog Specialist Agency: DOC/CDBG Address: P.O. Box 200505 City/State/Zip: Helena, MT 59620-505 Ph: 406.841.2735 Fx: 406.841.2731 Email: nrich@state.mt.us Web: www.commerce.state.mt.us</p>
<p>Forsyth Team Member: John Tubbs Title: Bureau Chief Agency: DNRC/Resource Dev Address: P.O. Box 201601 City/State/Zip: Helena, MT 59620-1601 Ph: 406.444.6687 Fx: 406.444.2684 Email: jtubbs@state.mt.us Web: www.dnrc.state.mt.us</p>	<p>Forsyth Team Recorder: Gloria O'Rourke Title: Deputy Director Agency: MT RDP Address: 118 E. Seventh St.; Suite 2A City/State/Zip: Anaconda, MT 59711 Ph: 406.563.5259 Fx: 406.563.5476 Email: gloria@mtrdp.org Web: www.mtrdp.org</p>

LOCAL CONTACTS/COORDINATORS

Dennis Kopitzke, Mayor
City of Forsyth
Box 226
247 North 9th Avenue
Forsyth, MT 59327
Phone: 406.356.2521
Fax: 406.356.7560
E-mail: cityforsyth@mcn.net
Web: www.goforsyth.com

Doris Pinkerton, City Clerk
City of Forsyth
Box 226
247 North 9th Avenue
Forsyth, MT 59327
Phone: 406.356.2521
Fax: 406.356.7560
E-mail: cityforsyth@mcn.net
Web: www.goforsyth.com

Sandra Wright, Council Person
City of Forsyth
Box 226
Forsyth, MT 59327
Phone: 406.356.7617

LeRoy Larsen, Council Person
City of Forsyth
Box 226
Forsyth, MT 59327
Phone: 406.356.2123

Cathleen Fleming
Forsyth Chamber of Commerce
Box 448
Forsyth, MT 59327
Phone: 406.356.2111
Fax: 406.356.2996

Forsyth Community Assessment October 1 – 3, 2002

AGENDA

Tuesday, October 1st

1:00 PM to 2:00 PM	Orientation/Organizations Meeting	City Hall
2:00 PM to 4:00 PM	Resource Team Area Tour	
6:00 PM to 8:00 PM	Team Working Supper	Rails Inn

Wednesday, October 2nd

6:30 AM to 7:30 AM	Breakfast	Bloomin' Onion
7:30 AM to 8:45 PM	Agriculture	Bloomin' Onion
9:10 AM to 10:15 AM	City/County Governments, Law Enforcement, Emergency Services	City Hall
10:20 AM to 11:25 AM	Churches, Civic Groups, Health Care, Non Profits	Hospital
11:30 AM to 12:45 PM	Lunch	Hospital
1:00 PM to 1:55 PM	Break: Review Listening Sessions	City Hall
2:10 PM to 3:15 PM	Youth – 7 th – 12 th School	High School
3:20 PM to 4:25 PM	Educators, Bankers, Financial Planners	City Hall
4:30 PM to 4:55 PM	Break: Refreshments	City Hall
5:00 PM to 6:05 PM	Econ. Development, Chamber of Com., Utilities	City Hall
6:10 PM to 7:15 PM	Business, Retail, Industry	City Hall
7:20 PM to 9:00 PM	Supper	Speedway

Thursday, October 3rd

6:30 AM to 7:30 AM	Breakfast	Rails Inn
8:00 AM to 9:05 AM	Parents, Social Services, College Students	City Hall
9:10 AM to 10:15 AM	Break	
10:20 AM to 11:25 AM	Retirement Community – Villa	Haugo Center
11:30 AM to 1:00 PM	Lunch – Senior Citizen Center	Senior Center
1:00 PM to 4:30 PM	Team Meeting Preparation	City Hall
5:00 PM to 6:30 PM	Team Working Supper	M & M
7:00 PM to ??	Resource Team Town Meeting	Auditorium

By: Kathy Kaufman
Community Development Manager
USDA Rural Development
1629 Avenue D, Building A
Billings, MT 59102
Phone: (406) 657-6297, extension 4
Fax: (406) 657-6294
E-Mail: Kathy.Kaufman@mtbillings.fsc.usda.gov
Website: www.rurdev.usda.gov/mt/

I would like to thank the people of Forsyth and especially Mayor Dennis Kopitzke for the wonderful hospitality we received on the Forsyth Resource Team. I have traveled by Forsyth on several occasions but never realized all the great resources your community has to offer. This was a great experience for me and I definitely enjoyed my time in Forsyth.

The following report will offer some resources or suggestions raised during the listening sessions:

AGRICULTURE

There appears to be some agricultural diversity in the area with the possibility of pursuing ethanol resources, expansion of the local meat packing plant, cottage industries and value added agriculture. The community suggested forming an agricultural marketing club that could take advantage of the Internet and ways of marketing along with forming programs for the young people to get involved in agriculture. There is also the possibility for expansion of the stockyards and feedlot along with the development of your own products. The following resources can provide a variety of information in the area of agriculture issues:

Resources: Brent Poppe, Agricultural Marketing & Business Development Bureau
Montana Department of Agriculture
Livestock Building, 303 North Roberts
P. O. Box 200201
Helena, MT 59620-0201
(406) 444-2402 (www.agr.state.mt.us)

Montana State University Extension Service
336 Culbertson Hall, Montana State University
P. O. Box 172230
Bozeman, MT 59717-1752
(406) 994-1758
Website: <http://extn.msu.montana.edu/index.html>

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

There was a lot of concern on the drainage and storm sewers, streets and curbs, sidewalks and lighting for the exit ramps. The City has a long-range plan for prioritizing and fixing the concerns and doing other major projects. With the City owning adequate equipment, the labor could be done through the City/County employees. There are several State and Federal loan and grant programs available that provide financial assistance to communities to assist with both the planning process and funding for completing the projects.

Resources: Mitch Copp, Program Director
USDA Rural Development - Rural Utilities Service
P. O. Box 850
Bozeman, MT 59771
(406) 585-2529
E-Mail: Mitchel.Copp@mt.usda.gov

Treasure State Endowment Program

Department of Natural Resources and Conservation

RECREATION/TOURISM

A skateboard park, teen or activity center, safer playground equipment at some of the parks, more activities for younger generations and more community functions were expressed as a need for the community. The community may want to organize a Task Force to facilitate the development of a skateboard park along with some of the youths interested in the development of the project. I feel the teens need to be involved in the development. They can research funding opportunities and even be involved in fund-raising activities which in turn would give them an understanding of all the issues and costs involved in planning and developing a facility. The establishment of a teen club to organize youth activities may be an idea and possibly the basement of churches or community rooms could be a starting place for supervised activities

The possibility of more high school aged after school activities, preferable work oriented, could be established, such as low rate small businesses for lawn mowing, snow shoveling, etc. and target the seniors in the community.

The identification and whether the availability of Block Management in the area for hunters may also be a way to bring tourism in during hunting season. Having available maps of the specific areas and telephone numbers would be advantageous to the community if the program is available in the Forsyth area and hunters knew whom to contact.

Resources: Randy Lilge, Director of Parks and Recreation
316 North Park Avenue
Helena, MT 59623
(406) 447-8462
E-mail: rlige@ci.helena.mt.us

State of Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks
Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)
E-Mail: <http://fwp.state.mt.us/parks>

Victor Bjornberg
Travel Montana/Montana Department of Commerce
P. O. Box 200533
Helena, MT 59620-0533
(406) 444-4366
E-mail: victor@visitmt.com
Website: <http://travelmontana.state.mt.us>

Montana State Parks
1420 East Sixth Avenue
Helena, MT 59620
(406) 444-3750

MARKETING FORSYTH

There are currently several major events held in Forsyth and marketing the area to bring in additional tourists to visit the community was discussed. Signage both on the Interstate and in-town for places to visit need to be installed along with lighting on the exit ramps and welcoming signs. The community seems to work well together and some type of training outlining the sights and activities available in the area need to be implemented. City Hall has excellent handouts on things to do in Forsyth. This could be shared with the business owners and their employees so when tourists do stop and ask about things to do in and around the community, the employees/residents are willing and able to share this information.

A tourist information center patterned to bring tourists through town with rest rooms; picnic tables, etc. would be a good method to get information out about the community. Possibly the senior citizens could volunteer to man the center during peak hours.

Resources: SuperHost

COMMUNITY

Beautification was a major concern of the local residents. The City has a long-range plan for fixing the streets and completing other major projects. Promote and emphasize group work and public service. Possibly set up beautification events to include media coverage and maybe some type of recognition for those who participate.

Leadership fund-raising and marketing are key elements to initiating downtown improvements. Promote and initiate events that bring people to downtown.

Resources: Gus Byrom or Ann Desch
Community Development Block Grant Program
Montana Department of Commerce
1424 Ninth Avenue
Helena, MT 59620
(406) 444-2488 or (406) 444-1759

Montana Community Foundation
101 N. Last Chance Gulch
Helena, MT 59620

Rosebud County Extension Agent

LOCAL GOVERNMENT/COMMUNITY SERVICES

There is a need for childcare and expansion of career counseling and entrepreneurship training. A one-stop shop for human service offices that could include WIC, daycare, public health, etc. would be beneficial for the community.

The need for any essential community facility for rural communities has loan and grant programs available to help with economic development of these communities. There are also technical assistance grants available through State and Federal Agencies and various organizations to help assist with writing and submission of these grants.

Resources: Jim Atchison, Executive Director
SouthEastern Montana Development Corporation
P. O. Box 1935
Colstrip, MT 559323
(406) 748-2990
E-mail: southea606@earth
Website: www.semdc.org

Sue Gantz, Community Facilities Specialist
USDA Rural Development – Rural Housing Service
P. O. Box 850
Bozeman, MT 59771
(406) 585-2555
E-mail: Sue.Gantz@mt.usda.gov

HOUSING

A need for assisted living and expansion of the retirement community living was discussed along with affordable and livable rental properties and construction of new homes to purchase. A need to rehabilitate existing older homes was also a concern.

There are several loan and grant programs available for construction of new homes; purchase of existing homes; and rehabilitation of owner occupied homes and rental units. Community Facility loan and grant programs are available for rural communities and both low and guaranteed loan programs for construction of new rental units.

Resources: Kathy Kaufman, Community Development Manager
USDA Rural Development
1629 Avenue D, Building A
Billings, MT 59102
(406) 657-6297, extension 4
E-mail: Kathy.Kaufman@mtbillings.fsc.usda.gov

Sue Gantz, Community Facilities Specialist
Laura Horn, Multi-Family Housing Specialist
USDA Rural Development – Rural Housing Service
P.O. Box 850
Bozeman, MT 59771
(406) 585-2555 (Sue) and (406) 585-2559 (Laura)
E-mail: Sue.Gantz@mt.usda.gov
Laura.Horn@mt.usda.gov

Connie Onstad, Program Manager
Community Development Block Grant – HOME Program
P. O. Box 200545
Helena, MT 59620-0545
(406) 444-0092

Bob Morgan (Single Family Housing)
Matt Rude (Multi-Family Housing)
Montana Board of Housing
P. O. Box 20052
Helena, MT 59620-0528
(406) 444-3040

Fannie Mae Foundation
Mary Lou Affleck, Senior Deputy Director
Montana Partnership Office
404 N. 31st Street, Suite 220
Billings, MT 59101
(406) 259-7049
E-mail: mary_lou_affleck@fanniemae.com

Gus Byrom
CDBG for Public Facilities and Housing
P. O. Box 200523
Helena, MT 59620-0523
(406) 444-4477

JOBS AND BUSINESS

Support of existing businesses is a major concern as is customer loyalty. Stressing the importance of buying locally is critical in any community. A suggestion may be to have the high school students make buttons “I Love Forsyth” and sell at school activities/functions as a fundraiser. Then the local businesses could support this by offering a “Monthly Forsyth Community Day” where ALL local businesses could offer a 5-10% discount for local shoppers wearing their buttons on the designated day. This would need to be supported by all local businesses and would also help to establish customer loyalty.

Outreach for medical specialists to come to Forsyth on regularly scheduled days may also help to keep the residents in the community and outlying areas from traveling to Miles City and Billings to visit doctors.

Resources: John Guthmiller, Program Director
USDA Rural Development – Rural Business-Cooperative Services
P. O. Box 850
Bozeman, MT 59771
(406) 585-2549
E-mail: John.Guthmiller@mt.usda.gov

American Association of Healthcare Consultants
1926 Waukegan Road, Suite 1
Glenview, IL 60025
(847) 657-6964
E-mail: info@aahc.net
Website: <http://www.aahc.net/>

Forsyth has wonderful people and is a great location with good schools, hospital, historical buildings, museum, library, recreation, businesses, etc. The community needs to work together and support each other.

Thank you again for the wonderful time and rewarding experience.

By: John Tubbs
Resource Development Bureau Chief
Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation
P.O. Box 201601
Helena, MT 59620-1601
Phone: 406-444-6687
Fax: 406-444-6721

Thank you for the opportunity to participate as a team member in the Forsyth Resource Assessment. I found out that Forsyth is a great community. Your community is proud and should be of all that Forsyth has to offer its residents. I see no reason that the community should be anything but optimistic about the future. Yes there are challenges, but they are outweighed by the strengths in the community from schools and hospitals to the community leaders.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS:

Forsyth has tremendous assets. The schools buildings, administration and students are impressive. From ambulance to hospital to nursing home, Forsyth has a strong medical community. Two exits off of I-94, Highway 12, the railroad and access to near by airfields all are tremendous assets. The Yellowstone River and Forsyth's two river access points support current recreation and represent a great future potential to attract visitors. The historic main street businesses are a great local resource. The fairgrounds, retirement village, swimming pool, library, museum, churches, and golf set Forsyth apart from many rural Montana communities.

Community leaders are already taking the first step to build on these assets. The efforts to clean-up junk cars, lawns and buildings are beginning to show results. At several of the listening sessions the idea of improving the look of Forsyth as you exit the interstate was raised. One suggestion was the development of a visitor's center near one of the entrances to town. Another suggestion is to focus on the intersection of Front Street and 10th Avenue. Travelers often exit the freeway on to Front Street but do not cross the tracks to see downtown and all that Forsyth has to offer.

Forsyth offers an excellent place to raise a family. A strong feeling of community makes Forsyth a safe place to raise a child. Some people are moving back to raise their children. The difficulty is career employment. There is a good business base in retail, service with some manufacturing. Of course agriculture is the base. Growing existing businesses and attracting some new ones is the challenge. The community is focused on this issue. As I listened to the high school kids, I thought of all the graduates from Forsyth who have moved away and are pursuing careers across the country. The graduating class is ready to go; to leave Forsyth and face the real world. Graduates from 5, 10 or 15 years ago are the population that remembers simpler days growing up along the river. A community effort to contact these graduates and remind them of how great Forsyth is, along with a challenge to them to come back and invest in their hometown may bear fruit.

FISH WILDLIFE AND PARKS:

The two river accesses in Forsyth are valuable assets to the community. These provide great access to the Yellowstone River. My reaction when I saw the lower access was that it was good now but has great potential. Working with Fish, Wildlife and Parks, Forsyth could develop a real gem. In Helena we have Spring Meadow Lake. Spring Meadow was a gravel pit when I grew up. Today hundreds of Helenans cool off in its waters and enjoy the improved walking trail, maintained grounds, flush toilets and many picnic tables on hot summer days. It seems that with some strategic investment in the lower access site, Forsyth could develop a very appealing site that would attract visitors and the community of Forsyth.

From a tourism perspective, travelers are looking for good public access to the Yellowstone River. If you look close, you can find Forsyth's river access points. I am sure that more people would stop if there are signs at key intersections to direct people. With community services and great access, people will take advantage of the opportunity to be on the Yellowstone River. With the Lewis and Clark bicentennial upon us Montana is already seeing increased tourism associated with the trail. Forsyth's River access, if promoted, would attract some of these tourists to stop see the river where Clark floated by and visit Forsyth.

Contacts:

Doug Monger, Parks Administrator
Department of Fish Wildlife and Parks
PO Box 200701
Helena, MT 59620
Phone: 406-444-3750

Victor Bjornberg, Tourism Development Coordinator
Montana Promotion Division
Department of Commerce
PO Box 200501
Helena, MT 59620
Phone: 406-444-4366

LEWIS AND CLARK BICENTENNIAL:

Captain Clark and his party (York, Charbonneau, Sacagawea, Pomp, Pvt. Bratton, Pvt. Gibson, Pvt. LaBiche, and Pvt. Shields) descended the Yellowstone River in the summer of 1806. The party of 9 was on their way back to meet Captain Lewis at the confluence of the Yellowstone and the Missouri and to proceed on to St. Louis. In 2006, the National Bicentennial Celebration of the Lewis and Clark expedition will host a signature event at Pompey's Pillar. I have copied the National Bicentennial Web Page Description of this event (<http://www.lewisandclark200.org/>).

July 25, 2006 • Pompey's Pillar, Billings, Montana

Communities along the Yellowstone River, the longest free-flowing river in the lower United States, will welcome visitors to one of America's newest National Monuments, Pompey's Pillar. This event will focus on Clark's journey down the Yellowstone and the inscription of his name on Pompey's Pillar, the only remaining physical evidence of the Lewis and Clark Expedition appearing on the trail as it did 200 years ago. Clark, showing his affection for Sacagawea's infant son, whom he called "Pomp," named this sandstone pillar at the river's edge in his honor. In commemoration of this event, a Day of Honor will be declared with visitors being greeted by a new interpretive center and activities ranging from river floats, historical reenactments, and Native American games.

Signature Event Contact:

*Mr. J. Jeffrey Dietz
2109 11th Street West
Billings, MT 59102
Phone: (402) 256-8628
E-mail: dietzjjsl@aol.com
Website: www.clarkontheyellowstone.org*

Partners

Clark on the Yellowstone, a National Signature Event occurring on July 25, 2006, is a collaborative effort. Many individuals, businesses, agencies and civic organizations will contribute to this national commemorative event. New partners are welcome and may join the activities by contacting one of the persons listed below.

*Yellowstone County Lewis and Clark
Bicentennial Commission
Jeff Dietz, Chair
dietzjjsl@aol.com*

*Yellowstone County Board of
Commissioners
Bill Kennedy, Liaison
bkennedy@co.yellowstone.mt.us*

*Jim VanArsdale, Member
National Council for the Lewis and
Clark Bicentennial
vanar@imt.net*

*Rochejhone Chapter, Lewis & Clark
Trail Heritage Foundation
Armand Lohof, President
alohof@mcn.net*

*Pompeys Pillar Historical Association
Dan Krum, President
danielk@be.quik.com*

*Bureau of Land Management
Kim Prill, Montana Lewis and Clark
Coordinator
kprill@mt.blm.gov*

*Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks
Doug Habermann, Regional Parks
Manager
dhabermann@state.mt.us*

*Rocky Mountain College
Bruce Eberle, Dean of Continuing
Education
eberleb@rocky.edu*

Capitalize on this Signature Event. Forsyth, just one hour east of Pompey's Pillar, is on the trail, has good accommodations, community services, parks for groups of people and an excellent fairground. If done properly, the bicentennial celebration will be the introduction of many new people to a special place in America. Many will return; some may even choose to stay.

Contacts:

Mr. J. Jeffrey Dietz
2109 11th Street West
Billings, MT 59102
Phone: (402) 256-8628
E-mail: dietzjjsl@aol.com
Website: www.clarkontheyellowstone.org

Clint Blackwood, Executive Director
Montana Lewis & Clark Bicentennial Commission
PO Box 201203
Helena, MT 59620-1203
(406) 443-2109
(406) 841-4004 (fax)
cblackwood@state.mt.us

INFRASTRUCTURE:

The infrastructure issue we heard the most about is the need for a storm water system, which would allow the city to maintain streets and gutters. Storm water is an issue that has taken a back seat to providing safe drinking water and to keep sewage treatment in compliance with rules under the Clean Water Act. There are some programs that can help. Rural Development will fund storm sewer. Rural Development's programs provide both grant and loan funds. Funding levels are determined by median household income and system costs. The Pollution Control State Revolving Loan program will provide low interest loans for Storm Water Projects. The Coal Board is another source of potential grant funds for this type of project. However, budget cuts have affected the amount of funds available and future funding for the Coal Board will be an item debated in the upcoming session. The other source of grant funds I would recommend on this project would be to pursue Community Transportation Enhancement Program (CTEP) funding through the Department of Transportation.

This will be a great challenge for Forsyth. Storm water, paving and curbs will be expensive. Residents want estimates on how much it would cost so that they can make the decision based on facts. On that note, I would recommend seeking a planning grant through the Treasure State Endowment Program or the Renewable Resource Grant and Loan Program. Both of these grant programs provide 50/50 project planning grants. Funds for the current biennium have already been allocated. However, on July 1, 2003 a

new allocation of funding will be available. Planning grants can defray as much as 50 percent of the planning costs. If Forsyth can't wait that long, a low interest loan (right now just over 3 percent) from the Board of Investment is available. Loans for preliminary engineering require only interest payments for 3 years while the community puts the project together. Then with construction of the project the loan is paid off either with grant funds or long-term debt. If the project does not move forward, then loan is amortized over a 10 year term.

Finally, as the City analyzes this investment keep a close eye on the plans and specification to assure access for the handicap. Handicap accessibility is a critical issue when putting in curbs and the community may want to involve experts and individuals from the community to assure this issue is thought about up front and implemented properly.

For more information about water and wastewater infrastructure you can contact one of the people below or log on to the WASACT web page at <http://www.dnrc.state.mt.us/cardd/wasact.htm> .

Contacts:

Mitch Copp
USDA Rural Development
PO Box 850
Bozeman, MT 59771

Phone: 406-841-2785
Fax: 406-841-2771

Newell Anderson, Coal Board
Department of Commerce
PO Box 200501
Helena, MT 59620
Phone: 405-841-2772
Fax: 406-841-2771

Todd Teegarden, Pollution Control
State RLF Program
Department of Enviro. Quality
PO Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620
Phone: 406-444-5324

Mike Davis, CTEP Coordinator
Department of Transportation
PO Box 201001
Helena, MT 59601
Phone: 406-444-4383
Fax: 406-444-7671

John Tubbs, Chief
Resource Development Bureau
DNRC
PO Box 2001601
Helena, MT 59620

Jim Edcomb, Program Manager Treasure State
Endowment Program
Department of Commerce
PO Box 200501
Helena, MT 59620

Geri Burton, Bond Program Officer
Board of Investments
PO Box 200545
Helena, MT 59620
Phone: 406-444-1365
Fax: 406-449-6579

IRRIGATION:

Agriculture in rural Montana is the base of the economy. In the Yellowstone Valley irrigated agriculture provides the opportunity to grow high valued crops. Sugar Beets, potatoes, malt barley are a few of the high valued crops that are grown near Forsyth. Efforts to attract agriculture manufacturing are being forged by local entrepreneurs, economic development organizations, and state agencies. Efforts to keep the agriculture businesses we have now are also being assisted by state efforts. The Vision 2005 task force set forth a series of programs to assist local efforts to sustain and build agriculture. The goal was to double the value of agriculture by 2005. A key piece of irrigation infrastructure in the Forsyth area is the diversion dam and canal facilities of the Cartersville Irrigation District. The facility was built in 1934 and serves approximately 10,000 acres with water from the Yellowstone River. As you might expect, the eighty-year-old facility is in need of repair and replacement. The district failed to compete for a renewable resource grant to replace the Sand Creek siphon this year. We expect an improved application next cycle and for the project to compete successfully.

The diversion dam for Cartersville has been a topic of discussion for some time now. The Yellowstone River is the longest river in America that has not been dammed. Currently efforts are focused on the Intake Diversion downstream of Glendive. The Lower Yellowstone Irrigation District working with the State of Montana, Bureau of Reclamation, and American Rivers is moving forward on the replacement of the intake diversion dam. The diversion at Intake is the first barrier on the Yellowstone River that prevents fish passage. The proposed structure will be designed to allow flows to pass the diversion so fish can migrate and at the same time provide a new structure to the irrigation district so that they can withdraw needed irrigation waters. The investment will improve both the irrigation facility and the river. Once the Intake facility is completed the next barrier across the river is the Cartersville Irrigation District Divers dam at Forsyth. The opportunity exists to team with groups that want to protect the river so that needed investment in irrigation infrastructure is made affordable and the river benefits as well.

The Yellowstone River Conservation District Council is coordinating an effort to evaluate the health of the Yellowstone River and is working with "stake holders" to find solutions to a wide assortment of issues. Agencies such as the Departments of Natural Resources and Conservation, Fish Wildlife and Parks, and Agriculture from the state and Bureau of Reclamation, Army Corps of Engineers, and the U S Fish and Wildlife Service are all partners in this effort. The Council also has the Yellowstone River Forum participating in their efforts. The Forum represents several conservation-oriented groups that are focused on the health of the Yellowstone River system. Through this process, there may be opportunities for the Cartersville Irrigation District to participate in the partnership and in the end may find financial support to both upgrade the diversion facility and improve the river.

In an effort to enhance the value of irrigation, the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation has established the irrigation development program. Headquartered out of

Billings Montana, Pat Riley has already established several contacts with irrigators in the Forsyth area. A key proposal that this program has developed with the Lower Yellowstone Irrigation Districts is the Montana Natural Resources Act. This proposed federal legislation would authorize new irrigation development in Montana in the Lower Yellowstone and Lower Missouri River basins. The Act also secures low cost Pick Sloan Power for existing irrigation and planned future development. This effort will bring new investment into irrigation in Montana and will assure continued low cost hydropower be delivered to Montana irrigators. Water rights for new irrigation may be secured through the local conservation district. With a 1978 priority date, conservation districts have a substantial water right for future irrigation development along the Lower Yellowstone River. The priority date is important because it is ahead of the instream flow right held by the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks. By contacting the local conservation district or the DNRC's representative in Miles City you can find out more information on these water rights.

Contacts:

Kirk Montgomery
Cartersville Irrigation District
PO Box 668
Forsyth MT 59327
Phone: 406-347-5472

Jerry Nypen, Manager
Lower Yellowstone Irrigation District
Mount Pleasant Road
Sidney MT
Phone 406-4331306

Barbara Yoder, Executive Director
Yellowstone River Conservation District Council
1371 Rimtop Drive
Billings, MT 59105
Phone: 406-247-4414

George Jordan
US FWS
2900 4th Ave. North
Room 301
Billings MT 59105
Phone: 406-247-4414

Pat Riley, Program Manager
Irrigation Development Program
Department of Natural Resources and Conservation
Airport Industrial Park

Billings, MT 59105-1978

Duane Claypool, Program Manager
Conservation District Water Reservations
Department of Natural Resources and Conservation
PO Box 276
Miles City, MT 59072

SKATE PARK:

In many of the sessions, people asked about the development of a Skate Park so that the kids have a place to gather other than the Court House or a parking lot. Some even suggested a teen center like the one in Colstrip. Helena built a skate park last year. This was after two years of discussion and at one point real contention between veterans and the city council as to the proposed location in Memorial Park. A new site was found and the City built the park. The cost of the 10,000 square foot skate park was \$150,000 (including design costs). A significant amount of the costs were paid through fund raising and a matching grant from the Turner Foundation. The Turner Foundation required participation by local teenagers as a condition of the grant. Their participation was a strong point and should be part of any plan for Forsyth. The kids we met in Forsyth have a lot of enthusiasm and want to volunteer. Talking with Carol Kirkland of the Helena Parks Department, I found out that one of the difficult tasks was to find a contractor that could form the concrete for a skate park. Since the park in Helena has opened it has been a great success. There seems to always be someone using the park and at times there are up to 50 people skate boarding and inline skating at the facility. Last winter the kids were shoveling off the concrete so they could skate. Carol said that she has received calls from around the country to find out about the park and that people who use the park think that it's a great facility. The World Wide Web has several pages devoted to skate parks two are skatepark.org and skatepark.com. Other skateboard facilities located in Montana are in Libby, Missoula, Great Falls, and Bozeman.

Contacts:

Carol Kirkland
Parks Department
City of Helena
316 N Park
Helena, MT 59623
Phone: 406-447-8463

By: Lee Boyer
Montana Department of Agriculture
P O Box 200201
Helena, MT 59620-0201
406-444-2402
406-444-9442 FAX
lboyer@state.mt.us email

AGRICULTURE

There were several comments about commodities, products, processing, and value added industry. The best way to address some of these issues is to begin with a core group of people who are interested in this area, get together and do some brainstorming. Perhaps bring someone in that could facilitate the group to give them some guidance. I will try to address some of the issues separately in the following dialogue.

Value added:

Several individuals suggested industry or vertical integration of agricultural segments. Based upon the areas resources, feedlots for finishing cattle or back grounding cattle are a possibility. The individuals involved would need to come together as a group and develop a feasibility plan, find a location, as well as feed sources, water and waste water management plans.

Initial planning session:

Purpose: To bring together those individuals who are very interested in pursuing this idea. Develop a working committee to further develop the project i.e. visiting with resource groups, visiting the Custer area feedlot, visit other feedlot operators to gather information to report back to the group so all involved can decide if this is feasible or not.

Resources:

Brent Poppe, Bureau Chief
Montana Department of Agriculture
Marketing and Business Development Bureau
P O Box 200201
Helena, Montana 59620-0201
406-444-2402

Jennifer Anderson
Rosebud County Extension Agent
Rosebud County Courthouse
Main Street
Forsyth, Montana 59327
406-365-7320

Gene Surber
Natural Resource Specialist
Montana State University
Quality
217 Linfield Hall
Bozeman, MT 59717
406-994-1971
gsurber@montana.edu

Kari Smith
Water Protection Bureau
Montana Dept. of Environmental

P O Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620-0901
406-444-3080
karsmith@state.mt.us

Steve Pilcher
Executive Vice President
Montana Stockgrowers Association
420 California
Helena, MT 59601
406-442-3420
steve@mtbeef.org

Profitable/sustainable agriculture (Marketing club):

Marketing club expertise is currently available through the following organizations. They will assist you with establishing your marketing club, etc.

Steve Pilcher
Montana Stockgrowers Association
420 California
Helena, MT 59601
406-442-3420
steve@mtbeef.org

Alex Offerdahl
MarketManager Program Coordinator
Great Falls
(406) 761-4596
E-mail: bkdennis@mgsa.org

Electrical costs for irrigation:

Pick Sloan Act is an option (see John Tubbs)

Work Comp issues:

I would suggest a group of local producers work with their legislators to see what can be done to change those rates. Now is the time since the session starts in January

Keeping young people in farming and ranching:

There are several beginning farmer/rancher loan programs available from the following agencies.

Beginning Farmer/Rancher Loan Program
Lee Boyer

Farm Service Agency
Rosebud County

Montana Department of Agriculture
P O Box 200201
Helena, MT 59620-0201
406-444-2402
lboyer@state.mt.us

P O Box 6
270 South Prospect
Forsyth, MT 59327-0006
406-356-7333

Farm Credit Agency
103 North Sixth Street
P.O. Box 1787
Miles City, MT 59301-1787
406/233-3100
FAX: 406/233-3105

The Montana Department of Agriculture also has a loan program available for 4-H and FFA youth to finance their projects. These loans are a good education tool concerning the world of finance as well as providing funds to start these young people in agriculture. Concerning the transport of products and lack of implement dealers, I'm not sure there is much that can be done. Forsyth producers have easy access to the interstate, which is probably their best transportation resource. Railroad rates are difficult to change but they could garner information concerning railroad rates and what is being done from the following sources.

Jim Christiansen
Transportation
Montana Wheat & Barley Committee
P.O. Box 3024
Great Falls, MT 59403-3024
Phone: (406) 761-7732
Fax: (406) 761-7851
Web Site: <http://wbc.agr.state.mt.us>
email: wbc@state.mt.us

Montana Department of
P O Box 201001
2701 Prospect Ave.
Helena, MT 59620-1001
(406) 444-6200

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS:

See Nick and Kathy's comments. Resources should include, MT Dept of Trans, USDA Rural Development, and DNRC

Streets, curbs, and sidewalks are going to be a city or homeowner expense. Maybe a SID (improvement district) would be a means of funding these projects. Drainage and storm sewers may possibly be funded through some federal grants or long-term federal or state loans. Would need to do some research with Rural Development and Dept of Natural Resources.

RECREATION/TOURISM:

Again, these areas are probably better addressed by John Tubbs, Nick Rich, and Kathy Kaufman

Promote some of the big events that Forsyth hosts. The Quigley Shoot, the river access, get on the Lewis and Clark agenda to promote that Clark came down the river right here. Work with Travel Montana to develop a tourism-marketing plan for Forsyth. See if there are any grant funds available. I think an information visitor center would be a great addition to Forsyth. Man it with Senior's or high school volunteers or maybe a kiosk with information. Work with the MT dept of Transportation to create a more appealing entrance to Forsyth.

MARKETING FORSYTH:

I really encourage them to develop their website, but I also think they should consider looking at a theme, perhaps using one of their major events that they want Forsyth to become synonymous with. I.E. Quigley shoot could become their Montana Sheep Drive or State Fair type of draw. They could then perhaps look at doing other shooting events throughout the year. Cowboy Shooting Sports is a very popular sport and perhaps they should look at hosting something like that.

Work with the Department of Transportation to develop exit ramp lighting and signage. Signs to draw people across the tracks are a must and they should really promote their historical sight.

Redo their existing brochures with their main event as a focus and then get those out in the hotels and motels of the surrounding towns.

With their close proximity to Pompey's Pillar, they need to get involved in the Lewis and Clark bi centennial. There could be grant funds from MT Travel and or the Lewis

and Clark groups. Need to move quickly on this one. At the same time they will need to develop those two river access sights with appropriate Lewis and Clark signage.

COMMUNITY:

They have already begun their beautification efforts and everyone seems to be excited about that. I believe this is a community type effort and am not aware of any funds available but others in the group may know this better than I. I think there may be some funds for historical building maintenance and restoration. I know the city is using DEQ's junk car program but maybe there are more funds available from the Dept of Transportation.

Local government/Community Services:

I think there are some folks that would like to see a one stop human services office, which is more of a government effort than something, this team could do. I believe that if the agencies involved grouped together and were all in agreement that this would be beneficial and could show the benefits to the appropriate people, then this could come to fruition.

HOUSING:

See Kathy Kaufman

I know there are special state programs for single and multifamily construction, both state and federal. Someone or a group of folks need to do some research on this and find and individual or corporation who is interested in funding this type of project Resources would be Rural Development, Montana Board of Housing, Housing and Urban Development.

JOBS AND BUSINESSES:

This issue seemed to be the most important to most of the people we visited with. It is also the most nebulous in developing. We all know it is easier to expand existing successful businesses than it is to attract new business. Not that there isn't room for new businesses, it is just easier due to a lesser need for capital.

We would suggest that the best way to expand existing businesses is to get folks to shop at home. Maybe the best way is to go the extra mile to keep and get customers into our stores. Be the very best customer service representative in Forsyth. Every customer is as important as the President of the United States. With that kind of attitude and service, who wouldn't want to shop in Forsyth?

There is quite a little assistance available in the arena. I will list the ones I am familiar with below:

Brent Poppe, Bureau Chief
Montana Department of Agriculture
Marketing and Business Development Bureau
P O Box 200201
Helena, Montana 59620-0201
406-444-2402

Jennifer Anderson
Rosebud County Extension Agent
Rosebud County Courthouse
Main Street
Forsyth, Montana 59327
406-356-7320

Jim Atchison
Executive Director
SE Montana Development Corp.
P O Box 1935
Colstrip, MT 59323
406-748-2990

Tod Kasten
Regional Development Officer
Montana Department of Commerce
P O Box 200501
Helena, MT 59620-0501
406-841-

Montana Chamber of Commerce
Montana State Extension Service
Montana State University

CRITICAL ISSUES:

1. **ATTITUDE** Forsyth knows what their problems are, now they can work on correcting them but they must have a positive attitude at all times. NO WHINING!
2. **VISION** Forsyth needs to have a unified vision of what they want their town to look like in 5 years and 10 years and they must hold that near and dear and not let anyone steal it away via negative comments.
3. **COMMUNICATE** Forsyth must communicate this vision and the efforts they are making and the headway they have made to anyone that will stand still and listen. They must tell each other and everyone they come in contact with what, how, and why they are doing this. This creates excitement and maintains their vision.

**By: Nick Rich, Program Specialist
Regional Development Bureau
301 South Park Ave
Helena, MT 59620**

**Phone: 406.841.2735
Fax: 406.841.2731
E-Mail: nrich@state.mt.us
Web: <http://commerce.state.mt.us/>**

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

I want to thank the people of Forsyth for having been such wonderful hosts to our Resource Team. My stay in Forsyth was quite informative, and having the chance to meet with so many different individuals was rewarding. Forsyth is a community rich in natural resources, recreational opportunities, agricultural diversity, community infrastructure, and energetic leadership. It is obvious that the citizens of Forsyth hold a high regard for their community and a genuine desire to work together towards a brighter future.

The citizens of Forsyth have formed individual groups with common goals for the advancement of economic development, in addition to groups that are addressing social issues. I am addressing several major categories and sub themes from the listening sessions for which resources and guidance are available should the Town decide to pursue them.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS:

It was mentioned numerous times that there is a need for infrastructure improvements throughout the community. Projects included storm sewers/drainage, streets and curbs, sidewalks, and lighting on the interstate interchange. There were also comments made that there is a need to upgrade/improve the Town's water and sewer system.

The Town of Forsyth has developed a Capital Improvements Plan (CIP). A CIP is typically a 5 to 20 year working document that should be updated yearly. The CIP if utilized as intended will provide the community with a timeline and proposed budget to make improvements to infrastructure throughout the town. Typically a CIP will include the following infrastructure projects:

- Water system
- Wastewater system
- Road/Transportation system improvements
- Storm Sewer/drainage
- Park improvements

- Fire Department
- Sidewalks

Your local planner or consultant can either develop or update your CIP. Doing a “Needs Assessment” and involving the community in public meetings will help in determining project priorities. Plus keeping the community informed helps everyone understand why projects are prioritized the way they are.

There are many financing strategies available to complete projects. Implementing these strategies can take two to five years to coordinate, thus the importance of having comprehensive planning in place.

The following people and agencies can provide guidance on applying for planning grants, preliminary engineering reports (PER) grants, or assist in giving direction on how to best approach certain projects. These agencies can also provide guidance in hiring a professional consultant.

Contacts

Nick Rich
CDBG-ED Program Specialist
Commerce Loan Fund
301 South Park Avenue
Helena, MT 59602
Phone: 406-841-2735
Fax: 406-841-2731
Email: nrich@state.mt.us
http://commerce.state.mt.us/BRD/BRD_CDBG.html

MDT Glendive District
Bill McChesney, District Administrator
503 N River Ave., PO Box 890, Glendive, MT 59330-0890
Phone: 406-377-5296 or 888-689-5296
Fax: 406-377-8160
Email: bmcchesney@state.mt.us
<http://www.mdt.state.mt.us/districts/glendive/>

Gus Byrom
CDBG Program Manager, Public Facilities and Housing
Community Development Block Grant Program
Montana Department of Commerce
301 South Park Avenue
Helena, MT 59620
Phone: 841-2777
Email: gbyrom@state.mt.us
http://commerce.state.mt.us/CDD/CDD_CDBG.html

Jim Edgcomb
TSEP Program Manager
Treasure State Economic Development Program
Montana Department of Commerce
301 South Park Avenue
Helena, MT 59602
406-841-2785
Email: jedgcomb@state.mt.us
http://commerce.state.mt.us/CDD/CDD_TSEP.html

Bob Fischer
Montana Department of Natural Resources
Renewable Resource Grant & Loan Program
1625 11th Ave
Helena, MT 59602
406-444-6688
Email: rfischer@state.mt.us
<http://www.dnrc.state.mt.us/cardd/cardd.html>

Mitchel R. Copp
USDA/Rural Development
PO Box 850
Bozeman, MT 59771-0850
406-585-2520
<http://www.usda.gov/rus/>

Geri Burton
MT Board of Investments
PO Box 200126
Helena, MT 59620-0126
406-444-1365
Email: gburton@state.mt.us
http://www.investmentmt.com/BOIprograms_INTERCAP.htm

MARKETING FORSYTH:

Many comments were made about the assets that Forsyth has. Marketing these assets and letting folks traveling along the interstate know what Forsyth has to offer is key. Prior to actually getting a tour by the Mayor through the town, I had no idea of the wonderful attractions that Forsyth has. If Forsyth is marketed on the tourist market for its assets, it would only be a matter of time before outside businesses start to take notice also. The Resource Team during our brain storming session and reviewing every ones

comments from the listening session came up with a list of different ideas for marketing Forsyth's assets. Here is the list:

- Develop Town Website
- Install Interstate Freeway Signage
- In Town Signage
- Historical Building Designation/Signage/Tours
- Advertise Major Events & Attractions
 - Quigley Shoot
 - County Fair
 - Forsyth Days
 - County Museum
 - Rodeo/Team Roping Events
 - Sporting Events...ect

- Promote the Bi-Centennial event of the Lewis and Clark Corps of Discovery
- Promote the Available Business Space
- Sports Tournament Capability
- Interstate and Rail Access
- Retirement Community
- Medical Facilities
- Conventions/Conferences
- Workforce Available
- Quality of Life
- Recreational Facilities
 - Golf course
 - Indoor swimming pool
 - Ball fields with lights
 - Rodeo/Fairgrounds
 - Yellowstone River access/FWP Recreation Sites

There are many agencies, organizations, and consultants available to help the Town of Forsyth to promote all of its assets. The Town of Forsyth is a member of the South Eastern Montana Development Corporation (SEMDC). The Town has been utilizing SEMDC in a very effective way to help local businesses improve and expand their assets.

Any development in and around Forsyth affects the region due to the towns' geographic location. Because of this it is important to include Rosebud County, the Chamber of Commerce, local businesses and rural businesses as part of the promotion of Forsyth/Rosebud County. The City of Hardin has done extensive marketing of its resources and could be a very good model for Forsyth to pursue. The City of Hardin had a private community-planning firm from Wisconsin develop a comprehensive plan for the community about five years ago. Priorities were developed out of this plan. Out of the original priorities most have been completed. Funding where planned for utilizing

local, state, and federal loan and grant programs. I am attaching a copy of Hardin's Plan.

Contact:

Pam Clark, City Economic Development Director
City of Hardin
406 N. Cheyenne Avenue
Hardin, MT 59034
406-665-2719
Email: cityofhardin@netscape.net
<http://www.hardinmt.com>

Victor Bjornberg, Tourism Infrastructure Development
Montana Promotions Division
301 South Park
Helena, MT 59620-0505
Email: vbjornberg@state.mt.us
<http://travelmontana.state.mt.us/>

Tod Kasten, Regional Development Officer
Montana Department of Commerce/Business Resources Division
PO Box 520
406-485-3374
Email tkasten@state.mt.us
kranches@midrivers.com

Mike Davis, CTEP Coordinator
Community Transportation Enhancement Program
Montana Department of Transportation
PO Box 201001
2701 Prospect Pvenue
Helena, MT 59620-1001
406-444-4383
Email: mdavis@state.mt.us
<http://www.mdt.state.mt.us/planning/ctep/>

The Montana Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commission
PO Box 201203
Helena, MT 59620-1203
406-443-2109
Email: landcwebmaster@visitmt.com
<http://montanalewisandclark.org>

Montana Chamber of Commerce
2030 11th Ave.
PO Box 1730
Helena, MT 59601
406-442-2405
<http://www.chamberofcommerce.com>

Fannie Mae Foundation
C/o Harriet M. Ivey, Executive Director
4000 Wisconsin Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20016-2800
202-274-8000
<http://www.fanniemaefoundation.org>

Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks
Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)
Montana State Parks
1420 East Sixth Avenue
Helena, MT 59620
406-444-3750
<http://www.fwp.state.mt.us/parks/landw/index.asp>

**By: Gene Vuckovich, Executive Director
Montana Rural Development Partners, Inc.
118 East Seventh Street; Suite 2A
Anaconda, MT 59711**

**Phone: 406.563.5259
Fax: 406.563.5476
E-mail: genev@mtrdp.org
Web: www.mtrdp.org**

I wish to thank the community of Forsyth and our sponsors, especially those who provided our lodgings and meals, and to Mayor Kopitzke, City Council members, and most of all the citizens of Forsyth for the time and energy expended in making this Resource Team visit such a pleasure. I was made to feel right at home.

I was truly impressed with Forsyth, its citizens, location and what it has to offer those in search of a quality of life not found in many areas of the country. My impression of Forsyth, through my own observation and the listening sessions is that it has great, untapped potential. We heard over and over again about Forsyth's great location, recreational amenities, access to the Yellowstone River, interstate highways and railroads, swimming pool, library, museum, golf course, movie theater, and fair grounds, services such as: medical, schools, fire, safety, local government, retirement living. With that said, I would like to address a few issues that I became aware of during my visit to Forsyth.

Attitude: Forsyth needs to "Sell Forsyth" to Forsyth before they can sell it to anyone else. Some group (possibly the Chamber of Commerce, City Government, local newspaper or citizens group) should extol Forsyth's virtues and the many pluses they have, but most of all their quality of life (friendly citizens, good schools, highly effective fire department, good police department with low crime rate). Get the word out to the rest of the world that "Forsyth is My Town and there are few, if any that can compare with it." The citizens of Forsyth have rallied support for crisis in the past and must be willing to address some of their 'challenges' such as housing needs, economic development and youth problems as if they were real life crisis.

Training: There appears to be a need for partnership building/teamwork, local leadership training, business planning/entrepreneurship training and marketing. I would recommend that contact be made with nearby Miles City Community College for help in these areas. Someone (Economic Development Team) must take the lead in this endeavor and it might be advisable to send an individual to a grant-writing program. Once the individual is trained in grant writing, he/she could apply for various leadership-training grants, business planning/entrepreneurship training and marketing grants. The trained individual may be able to apply for a community-building grant, which could fund the individual while they search for funding to address community-building issues.

Grant Writing recommendations: Having been involved in several grants efforts, I can appreciate how much time an individual commits to the process. I would suggest reviewing the Volunteer Survey sheets collected during this Resource Team session and contact anyone who may have an interest in grant writing or a passion for a particular project that will require a grant. Organize a grant-writing workshop and actually begin to write the grant during the workshop. Our Forsyth 'Recorder', Gloria O'Rourke attended an excellent class by Janet Cornish of Community Development Services of Montana. As grant writing is a time-consuming and often a thankless task, she suggests "perks" be given to the writer. For example, if funds are not available to pay the writer, offer in-kind donations (such as gift certificates at several local businesses, savings on purchases at a local business, etc.) could serve as an incentive. Should the grant be awarded, the grant writer could be paid from those funds and/or offered, "perks" once again for their efforts.

The Montana Rural Development Partners have recently joined with "Grant Station" and will make available to those interested in obtaining grants for projects a weekly email newsletter of granting opportunities. If you are not receiving this information now, please contact our office and we will put you on the recipients list at no cost.

Contact: Janet A. Cornish
Community Development Services of Montana
954 West Caledonia
Butte, MT 59701
Ph/Fx: 406.723.7993
Email: janallyce@aol.com

!

For in-depth information, review the book online titled "Finding the Funds You Need: A Guide for Grant-seekers located at:
http://cedev.aers.psu.edu/FundGrnt_Bklt_Fnl_REV.pdf

Planning: Before the community can address many of its perceived challenges, there should be some sort of survey(s) done on such things as:

Housing Needs: Survey on housing demand that would look at the type of housing needed (senior housing, starter homes, rental units, multi-family units, apartments, etc) and the affordability of it.

Retail Businesses: A survey is needed on retail leakage and reasons for it. What types of businesses are needed in Forsyth and **are the residents willing to support them?** What can be done to support the existing businesses and help them expand?

Community's Vision: What is the common vision that the majority of the residents can agree on? Where does Forsyth want to be in the next 5, 10 or 20

years? Hopefully, the Resource Team Visit will serve as a starting point for the residents of Forsyth in answering this question.

Tourism/Community Marketing Plan: Do the citizens of Forsyth want to encourage tourism expansion in Forsyth?

Surveys can be conducted by volunteers or with the help of professionals. The Extension Service from Montana State University and local extension agents are used extensively in helping communities do surveys on most of the items listed above. I would suggest that the proposed 'Development Group', the Chamber, City Government or individual citizens contact the Montana State University Cooperative Extension for assistance and information on the items above. Once the housing issues are well defined, I would suggest that the Montana USDA Rural Development Office be contacted for assistance. Resource Team member, Kathy Kaufman would be an excellent resource.

Contacts:

Jennifer Anderson and/or Stephen Hutton
Rosebud and Treasure Counties
Extension Service
Rosebud County Courthouse on Main Street
P.O. Box 65
Forsyth, MT 59327
E-mail: janderson@montana.edu
shutten@montana.edu

Kathy Kaufman@mtbillings.fsc.usda.gov
Community Development Manager
USDA Rural Development
1629 Avenue D, Building A
Billings, MT 59102
Phone: (406) 657-6297, extension 4
Fax: (406) 657-6294
E-Mail: Kathy.Kaufman@mtbillings.fsc.usda.gov
Website: www.rurdev.usda.gov/mt/

The Forsyth Community Resource Team identified eight (8) major topics during the listening sessions in Forsyth. Several sub-topics were identified under each of main topics. I will identify each of the major topics and suggest actions for some of the sub-topics.

AGRICULTURE:

Team member, Lee Boyer, has addressed several of the issues regarding agriculture. I would suggest that the agriculture community consider the establishment of an agriculture cooperative. The Montana USDA/Rural Development has a cooperative specialist on board in their Bozeman office that is quite knowledgeable regarding the establishment of agricultural cooperatives and I would urge contact with him if there were enough interest within the ag community. The establishment of some type of value added or vertical integration of agricultural products could prove to be invaluable to the Forsyth area. Concern was expressed by several individuals regarding the Workmen's Compensation requirements on farm labor. The only suggestion I would have regarding this is to talk to your local legislative representatives in both the Montana House and Senate regarding possible changes in state law dealing with Worker's Comp issues in Montana.

Contacts:

Bill Barr, Cooperative Specialist
Montana USDA Rural Development State Office
P.O. Box 850
900 Technology Blvd.
Bozeman, MT 59771
Phone: 406.585.2545
Fax: 406.585.2565
E-mail: Bill.Barr@mt.usda.gov
Web: www.rurdev.usda.gov/mt

Lee Boyer, Bureau Chief
Montana Department of Agriculture
Department of Ag/Rural Development
P O Box 200201
Helena, MT 59620-0201
Phone: 406-444-2402
Fax: 406-444-9442
lboyer@state.mt.us email

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS:

The Resource Team heard at almost every session, the need for drainage and storm sewers. This issue is addressed by several of the other team members. It is our understanding that due to the diligent efforts of local officials NAPA Lake may be a thing of the past. Lighting regarding the on/off ramps from the interstate highway was reported as a real concern. Contact should be made with the Montana Department of Transportation regarding this issue. Also, the Montana Highway Department should be contacted regarding the use of CTEP Funds for a possible walking/bike trail along the Yellowstone River and throughout the community.

Walking Trail: This project could be funded, in part, through the Montana Department of Transportation's Community Transportation Enhancement Program (CTEP). Through this program, the City of Forsyth, and Rosebud County each receive annual allocations that can be used to finance projects that are traditionally not funded with transportation dollars, such as pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

Public input during the project planning process is vitally important. I would encourage people with an interest in having a walking trail to form a committee that would select a preferred location for the trail, determine what the scope of the trail should be, identify the type of materials that can be used, and then formulate a preliminary cost estimate. The committee would take this information to the City and County and ask that the project be considered for CTEP funding. Ideally, the City and County would share resources so that more sections of the trail can be built.

I am not sure what amounts have been allocated to both Forsyth and Rosebud County under the CTEP program, but with both the city and county working together and with the local match requirement adding another 13.42% to the project's budget, it is possible that a sizable amount would be available for the construction of a walking trail. In addition, the CTEP offers several options that make it possible for the City and/or County to leverage those dollars so that more of their CTEP dollars are available for construction. The key to success is working closely with the CTEP staff in Helena and MDT staff in Billings. It would also be helpful if each government select a single person to serve as their Local Program Administrator (LPA). Mayor Dennis Kopitzke or one of his staff members would be a logical choice. The LPA serves as the liaison between the local government and the MDT. This relationship allows the LPA to learn more about this complex program while developing long-term relationships that help make the project development process more efficient and effective.

Each of the following people is willing to answer any questions you may have about the Community Transportation Enhancement Program or how it is administered by the Montana Department of Transportation.

Contact information:

Thomas Martin
CTEP Bureau Chief
MT Dept. of Transportation
Helena, MT 59620-1001
P.O. Box 2010011
Phone: 406.444.0809
Email: tmartin@state.mt.us

Bruce Barrett, District Administrator
MT Dept. of Transportation

424 Morey Street
P.O. Box 20437
Billings, MT 59104-4138
Phone: 406.657.0210
Fax: 406.657.0932
E-Mail: bbarrett@state.mt.us

RECREATION/TOURISM:

The bike and walking trail were covered in a previous part of this report. The Resource Team heard from the youth and from several adults that there is a need for a skateboard park in Forsyth. Several cities have established skateboard parks, including Helena, Libby and Bozeman. Libby built the first skateboard park in Montana approximately 10 years ago for \$10,000. Last summer, the City of Helena completed a 10,000 sq. ft. facility for \$69,000.

Begin by organizing a Task Force to facilitate the development of a skateboard park. Representatives from the City of Forsyth, Rosebud County, and the Chamber of Commerce should be joined on the Task Force by youth interested in developing the project. Possibly, a City Commissioner or someone from the Chamber of Commerce could serve as the Project Coordinator. The Task Force should then open a dialogue with representatives from the Helena Park and Recreation Department and Libby Skate Park Inc. to understand how each of these communities were able to complete their projects.

Contact Information:

Libby: Jane Thom
Libby Skate Park Inc.
Phone: 293-574
Email: janiethom@yahoo.com

Helena: Randy Lilge

Director of Parks and
Recreation
City of Helena
316 North Park Ave.
Helena, MT 59623
Phone: 447-8462
Email: rlilje@ci.helena.mt.us

Potential Funding Sources:

Turner Foundation
Turner Youth Development Community Initiative
Program Department
One CNN Center, Suite 1090 South Tower
Atlanta, GA 30303
Website: <http://www.turnerfoundation.org/turner/application.html>

Application Deadlines: December 15, March 15, June 15 and September 1 Montana

Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks
Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)
Montana State Parks
1420 East Sixth Avenue
Helena, Montana 59620
Telephone: 444-3750
Website: <http://www.fwp.state.mt.us/parks/landw/index.asp>

MARKETING FORSYTH:

Several task force members mentioned a need for an information/visitor center for Forsyth. Most of the team members had been to Forsyth in the past, but were unaware of the many amenities that Forsyth has to offer. Forsyth is one of the few places on the interstate system that has easy access to the Yellowstone River. Contact should be made with the FWP Department to improve and advertise these access sites.

Visitors are often influenced by their first impression of the community or by whomever they talk with in the community. Thus, there is a need to try 'Super Host' training for those employed in the gas stations, restaurants, motels, etc. If visitors are treated well and told of the many things to do in and around Forsyth, they will stay a little longer and spend more money in the community.

Forsyth has so many assets that would market the community to the outside world, such as: Historical buildings downtown, Quigley Shoot, County Fair, Forsyth Days, the Museum, Team Roping events, sporting events, interstate/railroad access, the retirement community, available buildings, tie-in with the Lewis and Clark Centennial events, the Library and swimming pool, just to mention a few. There is a need for Freeway signage and in town signage to promote these things. Forsyth's website should be maintained and updated frequently.

COMMUNITY:

The City of Forsyth has embarked on a beautification plan that is already showing results with the demolition of sub-standard buildings, planting of trees and flowers, elimination of junk vehicles and weeds. These actions, along with a plan on maintenance and replacement of sidewalks and restoration of historical buildings will do much to improve the community image and attitude. The resource team received mixed signals during the listening sessions regarding community volunteers. Some people said that everyone volunteers and others said they can't get volunteers. There appears to be a need for more coordination and communications between various groups in the community. **Be proud of Forsyth, both the community and its citizens, you have a lot going for you.**

HOUSING:

The Resource Team heard that there is a need for assisted living accommodations in Forsyth. There is a great retirement community complex at the former air force base and excellent medical facilities in Forsyth, however, there is a shortage of assisted living facilities. We also heard that there is a need for modern homes to both purchase and to rent. Many of the older homes could be rehabilitated. As mentioned earlier, contact should be made with Resource Team member, Kathy Kaufman of the Montana USDA Rural Development office.

JOBS AND BUSINESS:

Several individuals said that there was a need to attract new small businesses. There is also a need to support existing businesses. We heard over and over again that several of the small businesses in town provided great customer services (the hardware store and the drug store were mentioned several times). These businesses have discovered that Great Customer Services = Customer Loyalty. We, also, heard that there was a lack of career and/or high paying jobs in the area and that therefore Forsyth is having a problem keeping their young people in the area. This is a problem in most Montana communities that were or are dependent on agriculture or extraction industries such as timber and mining. It is our understanding that Range Cooperative is expanding its service in the area. With the deployment of broadband telecommunications in the area comes the opportunity to attract new businesses that can locate anywhere because they do their business thru the Internet. It should be noted that although it is very glamorous to attract a big business to the area, it is much easier to help strengthen and expand existing businesses in the community. Forsyth is part of the Southeaster Montana Development Corporation and should work closely with it and its Executive Director, Jim Atchison in strengthening existing businesses and attracting new ones.

Again, I wish to thank the community of Forsyth for the hospitality shown our Resource Team during our visit. I, also, wish to thank the team members for their many hours of volunteer service to the community of Forsyth and a special thanks to our recorder, Gloria O'Rourke who keep us on track.

FORSYTH RESOURCE TEAM ASSESSMENT
October 15 – 17, 2002

PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES

PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES - AGRICULTURE

- Keeping young people in the community with viable jobs
- Lack of economic opportunities
- Drought
- Ditto
- To have ag machine, equipment, products available
- People leaving, lack of job opportunities
- Local economy
- Soil fertility and erosion
- State connection with agriculture – not getting assistance in this area
- Future development of resources
- Concerned about the way we cope with drought and lack of resources
- Open Sky project – may endanger the current way of life here and across Montana
- Need to understand our roots and go back to the basics – as a community
- Lack to allow new growth to happen
- Provide opportunity for youth to stay in the community
- People are not aware that when there is a crisis in the ag world it effects everyone
- Need sustainable agriculture
- Transporting products out of the community
- Need to make ag products profitable
- Need more effort from the community to deal with these problems
- Cost of electricity for irrigation
- A way for the next generation to get into ag and keep it profitable
- Lack of employment opportunities
- Future of health care in Eastern Montana as a whole
- Declining population as well as an aging population
- Provide assisted living
- Need to support medical facility
- Concern of declining tax base due to the city purchasing taxable facilities – will lose tax income
- Due to state cuts – trickles down to budget problems for us
- Feel lost control of schools, etc., due to State funding cuts
- Need better roads – “gravel road ends in 19 miles”
- Workman’s comp rates too high – can’t hire youth or ranch workers
- National programs that are beyond our control.
- Community is in a crisis because we are becoming a retirement community and businesses are needed soon.

- State is not being consistent in addressing chronic wasting disease – different rules for different animals, departments.
- No sales tax.
- Rosebud Creek Road – Custer’s trail – not paved.
- No implement dealership – have to go to Billings or Miles City – which causes money to be spent in a different community.
- Catalog usage cuts down on local economy.

**PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES –
CITY AND COUNTY GOVERNMENTS, LAW ENFORCEMENT, EMERGENCY SERVICES**

- Streets and roads – have a lack of manpower
- Lack of job opportunities
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Ditto – state tax structure causes problems with lack of jobs
- Sewer – old system and needs upgrade
- Ditto
- Recruitment of young new firemen for department – is volunteer
- Lack of things for kids to do after school
- Need cooperative effort in developing community improvement plan
- Loss of population base – how do we bring in jobs/ec dev back to the community
- Ditto
- Lack of economic development
- Lack of community recreation center
- Broaden business base – to keep from fading away
- Need to retain and create jobs and retain our youth
- Storm drains – need them
- Water lines have old valves – old system
- Job situation needs improved
- Need more volunteers – same people show up
- School funding – statewide
- Need funding sources for water and sewer projects – but hate to always have to go to the citizens for money
- Curb and gutters
- Need a workable means to get rid of marginal housing and replace with affordable improved housing
- Need older abandoned homes, junk vehicles removed

**PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES –
CHURCHES, CIVIC GROUPS, HEALTH CARE, NON PROFITS**

- High school enrollment and population decline – which brings on low real estate appraisals
- Loss of jobs
- Ditto
- Revenue currently generated in hospital facility is not enough to maintain facility – building is aging, struggle to get large ticket items such as x ray equipment - cat scan – equipment and building needs are too expensive for our revenue.

- If not for Colstrip and the railroad – we would be dying. If the Tongue River railroad goes through, we are sunk.
- Need spiritual emphasis in the community – more people need to attend churches available – would be good for the community
- Teen alcoholism problem in the town – is a daily problem, not just weekends
- Parental problem – parents don't mind that kids drink
- Export our youth – no career path here
- Nursing home is full – need assisted living facility to free up space in nursing home
- Ditto on needing career path
- Ditto on alcohol and substance abuse
- Lack of good quality rental property
- Had to close middle school – combined with high school – concerns for maintaining good school system
- Ditto we are a dying community
- Ditto on needing good rentals
- Real estate does not appraise well here – can't sell for a good price
- Beautification of the community – cleaning up rubbish, remove eyesores, enforce ordinances
- Need to repair and/or renew infrastructure
- Lack resources to entice larger businesses
- City and County seems to be almost a single source income – Forsyth based on ag and coal. Ag can't support us alone.- need different types of business.
- Ditto on substance abuse – two meth labs were busted last week
- Young teens, older teens – do not have a place to gather without problems
- Need moderate income priced housing – few places to rent
- Unemployment rate
- Drug problem in high school
- Housing is not good in Forsyth – rental or buying
- Industry needs to be brought in to keep jobs and young people
- Wages – hospital wages are not competitive – nor are other businesses wages
- Doctors or CEO's visiting – biggest problem is junk vehicles sitting on the street – unkempt yards, unmowed yards – does not make a good first impression
- Mosquito problem needs to be addressed
- Ditto unemployment – need to stop exporting our youth
- Shopping – clothing stores are lacking
- School funding is a major problem

PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES –

YOUTH: 7 – 12 SCHOOL

- Not very good drainage for streets
- Lack of population
- Some buildings need taken down and rebuilt
- Not enough for kids to do – need a recreation or activity center to hang out
- Nothing to do – so kids get into trouble
- Lot of garbage around town
- Bad roads – bumpy – need fixed in town
- Ditto
- Roads outside of town need help too
- Train crossing near the school
- Lots of garbage around
- Ditto – along side our roads coming into town
- No recreation center
- Population is decreasing – nothing to bring people to town anymore
- Garbage – around trailer parks is piled up
- Roads – dips in town
- Nothing to do here –
- Drainage is bad
- Difficult to find a higher paying job – get paid minimum wage no matter where you work
- People go other places to shop – they raise their prices – people go other places to shop
- No long term career choices in Forsyth
- Nothing to do
- Bad sidewalks
- No place for youth to go and be by themselves
- Over pass or underpass for railroad crossing –
- Repair basketball court at Middle School
- Once vandalism occurs, things are not repaired – like the courthouse bench
- Sidewalks
- School enrollment keeps going down – can't maintain programs we used to have
- Forsyth doesn't try to do anything new – or if we try something people drop it. Example: skateboard park
- We don't have anything to do so we get into trouble
- Need more community involvement
- People here are afraid to do stuff
- Town is run by old people who are happy with the way things are
- We don't have anything else to do but drink
- Alcohol is used everywhere – but we aren't any worse than any other community
- Lots of twentysomethings willing to buy alcohol for under age kids

PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES

EDUCATORS, BANKERS, FINANCIAL PLANNERS

- Super depressed economy
- Competing with interstate transportation through miles city and billings
- Need more jobs that pay a living wage with benefits and insurance
- Recruitment of industry for jobs
- Aging population
- Youth and young families need more healthy outlets
- Challenge to gear up and “go” to get projects done
- Current place for social services is going to have to move
- Lack of farm implement equipment here
- Lack of cultural activities
- Need a nice book store
- Hard to compete with WalMarts on both sides of our interstate
- Protecting our water – coal bed methane beds could endanger it
- Ditto – Smith Creek well is an example
- Fear, ignorance, fixes based on legalisms from above

CHALLENGES AND PROBLEMS

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, UTILITIES

- Infrastructure problems – water, streets, internet connectivity – basic needs
- Sustainable agriculture
- Community interested in helping themselves – community involvement is lacking
- Ditto – people talk but don’t “do”
- Ditto Ditto Ditto
- Marketing our town to businesses willing to come to Forsyth
- Small business growth
- Lack of good employment and career opportunities – losing our kids
- Lack of help for small businesses
- Lack of support and financial resources for small businesses
- Need better paying jobs – no career opportunities
- Need long term financing to sustain a new business until established
- Lack of pride in our community
- Need consistent tax system with schools, small businesses – on a state level
- Trained workers – need to have them available for a business opportunity
- Ditto – especially with technology

CHALLENGES AND PROBLEMS BUSINESS, RETAIL, INDUSTRY

- Finding quality employees is difficult
- Keeping shoppers shopping locally
- Offer opportunities locally –whether it is something to do on a Friday night or a variety of business – simply need reasons to stay here rather than go to Billings or Miles City
- Do not have a way to market Forsyth
- Town needs cleaned up
- Appearance is a major problem
- Pessimistic attitude hovers over the town
- Sad to see young people leave and never come back
- Need something to bring young people and young families here
- Better jobs to give young people an opportunity to come home to
- Need to educate people on the knowledge of the area – so they can tell tourists that stop by instead of saying there is nothing to do here
- Improve customer attitude so they support local business
- Improve retail business owners attitude to fill niches in shopping needs
- Need to clean up and beautify the city
- Create good quality good paying jobs to keep people here
- Need to work harder at getting people off the interstate and into town
- Stop the brain drain – provide good jobs for local youth
- Need better streets and curbs and sidewalks
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Better jobs that pay a decent wage – not just more jobs
- Depressed town attitude – need a cheerleader for the town
- Ditto
- Need some kind of growth – do clean it up so that it is attractive to growth
- Great location, great schools, need to use them!
- Need pride and positive attitude back –need to work together better
- Better housing – people don't want to move here partly because there are not good accommodations both in rental and self owning
- Division of goals between city, chamber, county, schools – don't seem to be united and working on the same goals. Appear to go in all different directions.
- Need to develop a plan that has set goals to achieve.
- Need university level courses available on the internet so students can take classes locally.
- Property taxes are too high
- Higher ed situation is crazy in Montana – too many colleges for our population base.
- Highway 10 through town – looks unkempt – BN needs to clean it up
- Front Street is very unattractive – it is what people see when they come into town – does not leave a good first impression.

- Customer service needs to improve and locals need a better attitude toward town visitors.
- Poor lighting on entrance/exit ramps.
- Cleaning up the town – sidewalks and curbs are nice but we have a drainage problem.

PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES

PARENTS, SOCIAL SERVICES, COLLEGE STUDENTS

- Employment – and with wages that will support a family
- Apathy in the community
- Depressed area – need to bring people in for services
- School district let SEMTEC lapse – which is a group of schools that have ITV equipment in common. We are now losing our ITV classroom.
- No employment here – nothing to bring people here for work
- Declining population will diminish services from the school – and we need to do something about this right now.
- School is overstaffed – when in a budget crunch they take services from students instead of cutting staff.
- Need more jobs to bring in more young families.
- Ditto
- Community needs to back school sports more. Homecoming – some businesses worked well with us, but others didn't.
- Parents need to get more involved with school sports and support their own children.
- People need to support the businesses we do have.
- People ask a business for money for sports but then don't shop there.
- Don't have a sense of community – too few volunteers doing their own thing – need to bring volunteers together.
- Community pride is lacking.
- School should be more of the hub in the community. Lack of public relations between school and community.
- School assumes the community is informed of what they are doing – but we don't know. Need specific lines of communication. Example: information needs to be made available when a student changes from the elementary school to the secondary school.
- Community needs to be more brought in to the school.
- Youth baseball, youth football, etc., in the community is not affordable to a lot of families – a \$40 fee is not possible for their child to participate. Fee is becoming more and more a hardship.
- Absence of day care
- Lack of communication between a lot of entities in the community – a group is working on assisted living – did an assessment survey. The city just did an assessment survey – we need to get all together.
- Local newspaper does not cover local events.
- Underage drinking and illegal drug use.
- Parents do not take a stand to discipline children regarding drugs and drinking.
- Law enforcement – some will enforce the underage drinking law and others do not.

- Streets, weeds, appearance and beautification – must start with city and county making their property look good. Then they can go after the homeowners, too.
- Too few forward looking leaders in our community.
- People want to keep status quo and not improve the economy
- Do not have a highly trained community ready to step in to jobs

PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES

RETIREMENT COMMUNITY

- More assisted living and subsidized living quarters
- Drainage needed off of Main Street
- Ditto
- More doctors at the hospital
- Ditto
- Find jobs and businesses that could be brought in that need the railroad, interstate – possibly warehousing
- Need to keep our young people – don't want it to be a town of Senior Citizens
- Ditto all of above
- Need more jobs here – kids have to leave
- Clean up the town – not very inviting
- Front Street is a horrible road – and it is the first road people use when they come to town
- Have assisted living and nursing home but nothing in between – need it for younger folks that need assisted living, too.
- Need more doctors here
- Keep the young people here
- Holes in the pavement that are not marked – paint them bright orange and then repair them
- People don't welcome improvements sometimes – i.e., leadership almost impeached when got a used garbage truck to replace the horse-drawn garbage wagon in the 1950's.
- Sidewalks are in as bad as shape as our roads – if not worse.
- We are seen as “snob hill” sometimes – but try to prove them wrong

PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES -

MISC. HANDWRITTEN COMMENTS:

- Schools need to prepare our young people for college or to join an educated workforce – rather than with “just enough” knowledge to get by.
- Students entering higher education are not well prepared for what is expected of them.
- Students entering the work force do not possess the skills to become an asset to their employer – resulting in minimum wage jobs and difficulty in succeeding.
- Forsyth is a haven for low paying jobs. Most of the community must hold down two or more jobs.
- The few businesses that do offer higher wages and benefits are not coming available as longtime workers are holding on to them.

- Nothing to keep young graduates here.
- We cannot survive without new people coming into the community and adding to our economy.
- Streets – in the past three years the city has spent well over \$200,000 dollars on patchwork – lack a long range plan for street repair.
- City needs to be more aggressive in fixing potholes.
- Street lights – several lights around town that flash off and on and need repaired; some streets have no lights at all.
- No light poles – three blocks at west end of Oak Street and several blocks at the east end of Rosebud Street that don't even have light poles.
- Streets
- Empty Middle School
- Nothing for young families and young people to do
- Drugs and alcohol are available to young kids.
- Need new businesses
- Promote our area from the Interstate
- Bring a specialized business here – like Cabellas – I say Cabella's because of the hunting opportunities here.
- I think some of our major problems and challenges are cleaning up the town, having a safe community and environment for people of all ages.

**FORSYTH RESOURCE TEAM ASSESSMENT
OCTOBER 15 – 17, 2002**

STRENGTHS AND ASSETS

STRENGTHS AND ASSETS – AGRICULTURE

- Rural lifestyle
- Railroads, mines, industry
- Natural resources
- People and attitude
- Grains, etc.
- Ag diversity
- Interstate, bus, train, transportation
- Open space
- Yellowstone River
- Clean air
- Lack of crime
- Schools good (good ratio of teachers to students)
- Churches
- Empty useful buildings
- County seat
- Lewis and Clark historical trail
- Medical facilities and doctors

**STRENGTHS AND ASSETS – CITY GOVERNMENT, COUNTY GOVERNMENT,
LAW ENFORCEMENT, EMERGENCY SERVICES**

- Natural resources – water, land, fishing, etc.
- Services – medical, schools, etc.
- Location
- People of Forsyth
- Close to major airports, railroad, interstate
- Area brings in people – hunters, golfers, swimmers
- Basic infrastructure is okay
- Small, rural community – good to raise families
- Good schools
- Access to larger communities
- Recreation
- People based community
- Agriculture – farm/ranch
- Historic buildings on Main Street
- Low crime rate
- Save community
- Golf course
- Swimming pool

- Events that bring people in – fair, parks, businesses
- City officials work well with the County officials

STRENGTHS AND ASSETS – CHURCHES, CIVIC GROUPS, HEALTH CARE, NON PROFITS

- Medical facilities and medical staff
- Railroad
- Bedroom community to Colstrip
- River
- Close to Miles City and Billings
- Openness of small community
- Churches – variety to serve almost every faith
- People – friendly, cooperative
- Sports programs for youth
- Volunteer spirit of older citizens
- Community support of hospital
- Elderly living
- Interstate access to out of town shopping
- Parks for recreation
- Schools
- Grocery store
- Movie theater
- Service clubs/organizations
- Fair and fair grounds
- Pharmacy in town
- City pool
- Hardware store
- Auto parts store
- Range phone company
- Family values of community
- Restaurants
- Golf course
- Emergency services
- Beautiful court house

STRENGTHS AND ASSETS – YOUTH

- River
- Swimming pool
- Open spaces
- Support of our parents in athletics
- Bowling alley open ½ year
- School asks community for help – community does help
- Booster club

- Theater and golf course
- Hunting and fishing
- Service organizations
- Good schools
- Community works together
- Safe and good place to raise kids
- Variety of businesses
- Academics
- Everyone knows everyone else
- Law enforcement
- Retirement area
- Housing availability
- Safe community

STRENGTHS AND ASSETS – EDUCATORS, BANKERS, FINANCIAL PLANNERS

- Close knit community
- Good streets
- Good community services
- Excellent school system
- Attractive place to live/amenities
- Retirement system
- Dedicated professionals
- Golf course and theater
- Home town loyalty
- County/City work well together
- Fair grounds
- Guide area and hunting
- Stage in the high school

STRENGTHS AND ASSETS – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, UTILITIES

- Improving leadership in the community
- Empty buildings are available
- Golf course
- Quigley Shoot and other attractions
- Good people in the community
- Mayor’s radio talk show every Saturday morning
- Hospital and nursing home are good – close to major medical as needed
- Swimming pool – indoor
- Rail Road and interstate
- Ideal location
- School system
- Good library
- Ditto
- Historical buildings

- Yellowstone River
- Moonlight madness
- Historical theater
- City parks
- Quality of life – safe
- Shopping district
- Location
- ditto
- Ag diversity with climate
- Hunting, fishing, recreation
- Northern Cheyenne Reservation – cultural opportunity
- Museum/courthouse/historic buildings
- Support services, EMS, law enforcement, volunteer fire dept.
- State and county support with city
- Property taxes/services provided
- School system
- Open land
- Reasonable housing costs
- Two banks - one local, one chain
- Ample supply of power
- Swimming pool
- Tourism

STRENGTHS AND ASSETS – BUSINESS, RETAIL, INDUSTRY

- Retirement Community
- Library, pool
- Adult and children areas
- Recreational and historical aspects
- Diversity of economic opportunities
- Ditto
- Hospital, doctors, dentist, vet
- Historical proximity to other areas – Lewis and Clark
- Location
- Museum
- Ditto
- Larger communities are nearby
- Two interstate exits
- Golf course
- Airport
- Small business owners
- Quality of life
- School system
- Lots of marketing opportunities

- Historic downtown buildings
- Volunteers – strong small group
- Friendly town – once we get to know you
- People
- Great location
- Parks
- Golf course and country club

STRENGTHS AND ASSETS – PARENTS, SOCIAL SERVICES, COLLEGE STUDENTS

- People have skills to share
- Forward looking leaders
- Quality of life – clean and quiet, etc.
- Our children
- Small town pace/know each other
- Ditto
- Community involvement
- Location
- Recreation (hunting, fishing, boating)
- Good family oriented community
- Low stress
- People want to come back to raise their kids
- Crime rate is low
- Middle School/Air Force commissary/barracks to develop
- Retirement population
- Location
- County fair, pool, library, theater
- EMS
- Golf course and shooting range
- Schools maintained
- City parks

STRENGTHS AND ASSETS – RETIREMENT COMMUNITY AND SENIOR CITIZENS

- Retirement Villa
- Finance institutions
- Community support
- Good radio stations
- Golf course – reasonable cost
- Recreation
- Historical Lewis and Clark trail – Custer trail
- Climate
- Nursing home
- Friends and friendly place to live
- Hospital

- Ditto, ditto
- Doctors
- Business people are excellent and provide special services when asked
- Courthouse
- Small town – people watch out for one another
- School system
- Nice cemetery
- River and parks
- Short distance to Miles City and Billings but doctors are here

**STRENGTHS AND ASSETS –
MISC. HANDWRITTEN COMMENTS**

- Unique place geographically
- Nestled next to the Yellowstone River
- Major Interstate
- Tourism has great potential
- Other people think this is a great little town, too
- Relatively little crime
- Developed a tight-knit security within our community
- Parks are nice and well kept
- Pool
- Low crime
- Friendly people
- Pretty good school system – need more advanced classes offered to young adults
- Graduates are not quite as prepared as they could and should be – they are finding some difficulty with the college level studies.
- Strong community
- People pull together when needed whether person lives in or out of town
- Great personnel on the Fire Departments, Police, Emergency Crews, which is very important.

FORSYTH RESOURCE TEAM ASSESSMENT

OCTOBER 15 – 17, 2002

PROJECTS – ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR THE FUTURE

PROJECTS - AGRICULTURE

- More programs for our youth – after school and summer programs; a safe, supervised, active place for kids to go after school.
- Facilities for teenage/youth recreation that are free – tennis court, skate board area that kids would enjoy
- New businesses that employ six or more
- Forsyth investigates ethanol resources
- Expanded local meat packing plant -
- Cottage industries related to ag products
- Ag marketing club formed – take advantage of internet, marketing know-how
- More small and large businesses come to Forsyth – any kind
- Ditto
- Program for young people to get involved in ag – get them right on the soil
- Freedom to hire young people on the ranches – employment rules changed – workman’s comp.
- Rain!
- Value added ag
- Assisted living facility
- Solid ag base
- Pursue ethanol resources – use funds for expanded stockyards, etc., to use our clean area
- Develop our own products in our own area – we have the ingredients – need funding
- A few businesses that employ 50 or more – in 10 years
- Local vertical integration – keep value added, retain ownership, utilize transportation and water sources here – maintain feedlot and stockyards.
- High cost of workman’s comp problems solved – or at least competitive – and provided with other options
- A community that our children can come back to and make a good living as adults.
- An improved tax base that provides better roads, better movability of our products
- Young ranchers are provided a financial safety net to get them started in ag.
- Ag producers are able to make a living without doing two or more jobs.
- Back to the state inspector process for meat – so they have authority to okay without Federal check.
- Shortage of USDA inspectors.
- Chronic wasting disease problems
- Sales Tax issue addressed – whether for or against it – we need a tax base established
- Trees back on Main Street
- Diversion Dam and/or River projects conducted carefully and successfully

PROJECTS –

CITY AND COUNTY GOVERNMENTS, LAW ENFORCEMENT, EMERGENCY SERVICES

- More tourism opportunities in Forsyth – better use of natural resources and attractions
- Enough population growth to maintain the services we have
- Small clean manufacturers in place here
- Also, a larger manufacturing businesses – to empty at least 50 people. (follow Columbus’ example)
- Maintain golf course
- Continue and expand on current attractions such as Quigley shoot
- Bustling down town, lighting, flowers, benches
- Bike trails
- Schools expanded
- See lots of activity and growth
- Ditto all above
- That attendance increases for all of Forsyth’s special events
- Improved attitude for Forsyth’s special events
- Being storm drain project
- No empty buildings on Main Street
- Kokomo looking better
- Small industry and manufacturing improved
- Curb and gutter and streets
- Ditto
- Current businesses still in business for years
- Industry and manufacturing brought in – youth can work here and stay here
- Ditto
- Ditto – then we can afford the curbs and gutters
- Ditto all above -
- More businesses downtown
- New sewer system
- Community activity center – someplace for people to workout, indoor running facility, meet, perhaps add on to the pool facility.
- Youth government project – to accomplish other projects
- Expansion of senior assisted living
- Continue to have strong community leaders – have good people now – want to maintain good strong leaders
- Middle school building is used – perhaps for Lewis and Clark Bicentennial
- Trade school here – plumbing, carpentry, electrical
- County and city work well together in sharing equipment and cooperating on services
- May have developed even better cooperation between Miles City, Colstrip and Forsyth.
- Utilize the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial to improve the economy
- Home town of Bill Rains – used as a promotion for tourism - museum

PROJECTS

CHURCHES, CIVIC GROUPS, HEALTH CARE, NON PROFITS

- Stable and adequate medical facility – with current administration in place
- New businesses coming and staying in town
- All of the churches work together as a community within the community and promote fellowship among the groups
- People worship the Lord because He is God and people know him as their Savior.
- Churches torn down because they are too small – new ones and bigger ones are built
- Ditto
- Ministerial association expanded and more involved in working together and reaching out to each other. Want to see all churches grow.
- Ditto
- Youth have alternative to drinking – don't know what that might be....a place for them to go and be safe.
- Teach kids good decision making skills.
- Nicely paved streets –
- Midline price range clothing store
- Assisted living facility
- Ditto
- A place to buy a pair of shoes
- Things we already have are still here – not folded up and gone away – a viable community
- Older homes upgraded, re-wired, plumbing updated
- Expanded museum – bring in Bill Rains artwork, plus place for art shows
- Misquito problem resolved
- Middle school occupied with industry or small business of some kind – or reopened as a school due to more businesses in town elsewhere
- Forsyth is sustained – not grow a lot, but sustainable.
- More shopping availability – or at least more choices locally
- Ditto
- Ditto – but not a store like WalMart – but more small businesses like we have, expanded current businesses
- Paved streets and affordable storm drains in place, ripple fixed at the four way stop
- Expanded golf course
- More young families able to move back because of opportunities – that make substantial wages
- Assisted living facility
- Wages are competitive
- Higher Medicaid – Medicare reimbursements

PROJECTS:

YOUTH: 7 – 12 SCHOOL

- Forsyth days – try it another year
- Main Street – get some trees and make the appearance pretty
- Old buildings are either gone or cleaned up

- New businesses come in – more reasonable prices and shopping
- More greenery – more attractive
- Skatepark to be built
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Ditto – if in a good area that wouldn't conflict with other people's property
- Turn old grocery store into something for the kids
- Some kind of place to meet in winter time –
- More school enrollment – better athletics
- See a big business come in – like MT Power did for Colstrip
- Better weight room and other recreation facilities
- More community clean up –
- Fix things that need to be fixed such as the outdoor basketball courts
- More basketball courts and more equipment at the parks
- Different recreation –
- Increase in population
- Jacks IGA parking lot expanded
- More activities at the pool
- A place for teens to “be” that won't bother other people
- Population increased and town cleaner and neater
- Something for kids to do in the summer time – besides swimming everyday
- Gym is open all the time – a place to go – gym is not open in summer and outdoor hoops are not good or plentiful
- Need to repair a lot of things to make the town look better.
- Some corners are dangerous – can't see due to overgrown trees
- Need a place to go after football games to talk – with an arcade, cheap food and drinks – a cheap place to go and be together – as teens or with the whole community.
- Better drainage
- Arcade –
- Have Jacks parking lot and courthouse corner – and that is the only two places we have to gather
- Need stop sign by 8th st and main –
- Ditto, ditto
- Skatepark
- Need more clubs for kids – have boy scouts or girl scouts and 4H but need more choices

- Bank corner filled with the bank building they are moving in
- More people in the community
- Ditto
- See a big business come in
- Get the roads fixed
- More summer leagues – not just softball for little kids – see leagues for older kids
- Empty lots and space are used for something useful
- Able to use the playground and ground space in the retirement village area – use those lots for soccer field, skate board park or to put in a business
- Need more job opportunities – only have food places to work
- Clothing stores that actually make it and stay open
- See something new actually built
- Put the Middle School to use
- Ditto
- Clean up the drug problems – meth labs –
- Fair grounds going down hill – could use some work there, also baseball fields –have more grass than rocks and dirt
- Fast food restaurant come in –
- More jobs opportunities because we like to live here but know we can't find jobs here
- Need more support for sporting events
- We are forced to move out – nothing here for us
- Middle school could be used as a recreation center – still has a gym, could put in ping pong, concessions, video games
- Underpass/overpass for the train
- Focus more on busting hard drugs and less on busting pot
- Alternatives for drinking
- Youth have a program to visit elderly at the nursing home
- Colstrip has dances, workout places, gym, pool tables, a center for kids to go

PROJECTS

EDUCATORS, BANKERS, FINANCIAL PLANNERS

- Turn middle school into learning center – have health and human services, WIC, etc., in there, too, for a one-stop shop for human services.
- After school program for latch key kids- in the Middle school?
- Convert old Milwaukee rail road tracks to biking, running, walking path
- Utilize the Middle School for either business, activities – something!
- See more restaurants – especially ethnic
- Retain young people – have opportunities for them to stay or return here after college
- Quantity and quality of water is protected
- Able to purchase food from local producers and have it available in restaurants
- Forsyth people get active and produce Made in Montana products
- Have a Forsyth Wheat Montana
- Efforts made to use the energy that we are producing –

- Charcoal briquettes – we have coal burned in power plants – the same coal can be used for BBQs (investigate the market and transport in order to market briquettes)
- See the Amtrak come back
- Passenger air service is improved out of Miles City
- Utilize our wind and solar energy
- Potential for hot pool spa – combine with winter sports, bird watching, etc.
- Creation of 20 to 100 \$20k/yr jobs

PROJECTS

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, UTILITIES

- Market the town to small businesses
- ditto
- Take time to ask people to get involved and volunteer
- Report from this Resource Team Assessment is used and put to work
- Promote the mayor’s radio talk show Saturday mornings at 8:35
- Have a completed website up and running – from the Chamber and the City
- Promote Forsyth and all that we have to offer
- Use the resources and cultural opportunities at Northern Cheyenne and Crow Reservation
- Better utilize Yellowstone River for boating, jet skiing, boat ramps
- Expansion of museum and put up historical signs on buildings
- Retain the kids we educate
- Utilize transportation opportunities we have such as railroad
- Fill Middle School with business
- Maintain quality of life
- Renewed spirit and attitude regarding support for our community
- Really nice welcoming sign and landscape for welcoming
- Forsyth has decided if they want to maintain status quo or actively change the community
- Every empty building is filled with thriving businesses
- People are downtown on the sidewalks, visiting and shopping
- Jobs will be available for our youth
- Ditto
- Bike trails built, flowers beautify downtown
- Pretty town – clean, garbage is gone, junk cars are gone, pride in current buildings
- Take pride in your area – whether it is a home, business or park.
- Take advantage of Lewis and Clark bicentennial
- Curb to curb paved streets and storm drains throughout the community
- Ditto
- Establish a business incubator, light industrial park
- Ethanol opportunities used
- Processing for value added ag products

PROJECTS -

BUSINESS, RETAIL, INDUSTRY

- Develop a hook for people to drive off the interstate and a reason to pull into town
- Increase people’s cash flow so that we can support our town

- Work with highway department and BN to clean up highway 10 – especially along Front St. area
- Plant trees or greenery to provide a wind break
- Pave BN service road
- Beautify entrances to Forsyth – welcome signs
- Ditto
- School has a leadership role – and strong reputation
- Turn on exit ramp lights
- Small business owners are more involved in the community
- Encourage local people to shop locally
- Take advantage of our great location
- Another retirement addition like Riverview Villa
- Better housing
- Community pride with joint goals
- Bike path, youth recreation
- Resort utilizing hunting and the golf course
- No Wal Mart insight!
- New housing and beautification
- Removal of all junk cars – clean streets and sidewalks
- Walking trail along the dyke and river
- Curbs and gutters and storm drainage system are in place
- Clean the streets and drain the water
- Better use of the Yellowstone River whether for ag, irrigation or recreation
- Educate people as to what is in Forsyth
- Information center, visitor center or staffed center on the Interstate exits that highlight the uniqueness of the area
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Ditto – see Hardin’s
- Beautification program completed and all junk vehicles, garbage, weeds taken care of
- Sidewalks repaired – marginal housing removed and create more building lots for new housing
- Ditto – if we have a beautiful community people and businesses are more likely to come
- Middle school building is occupied – whether for business or schooling
- Enhance the historic district
- Met some of the goals we are discussing in this report
- Take advantage of the assets that we do have
- Some kind of plan for storm sewers – must have that before we put in curb
- Recycling center
- Develop a strong “we can do it” attitude community wide. Need housing? Get it done. Need bike path? Get it done. Need money? Let’s find it – get it done.
- Another source of industry to fill the houses and use the bike paths, younger population.
- Need a year-round economic base.
- Revive downtown as Twin Falls did – MainStreet program

- Signs on the interstate so people know what is here – historic district, museum, etc.
- Create a walking tour linking historic buildings
- Forsyth becomes a SuperHost community
- Mailing list of former residence and solicit them for funds for a project – tax deductible
- Market the museum better – share a curator with another town? – to make it more visible – have parking or pull-out parking near museum
- DSL will be available in November by Range Telephone
- Utilize old bridge – and brick building nearby
- Students plant trees in the area
- Custer Country – keep involved with the board – great source of information and resources.

PROJECTS

PARENTS, SOCIAL SERVICES, COLLEGE STUDENTS

- Employ or volunteer a person that is the coordinator or information point for the chamber activities, city activities, special projects, sports, a basic events and project information point.
- More people call the newspaper with events, meetings and information.
- Use fairgrounds for more than one or two weeks per year.
- Check with game warden about funds to fix the shooting range.
- Skateboard park – and teen center – check into what Colstrip did.
- Communications or businesses in the Middle School – with one room serving as child care center.
- Use Middle School for one-stop community services – with child care and a skate board park where tennis courts are. Find grant money as money is still owed on the building.
- Entire community cleaner – no junk cards or litter around town.
- Assisted living facilities to serve our aging population
- Assisted living facilities in the Middle School Building
- New businesses brought in – retain the ones we have
- Expand on what we already have – businesses and school services
- Water bills – reduced so that townspeople can afford to water their lawns – will make community look less shabby
- More affordable groceries available in town – more businesses cater to the community needs and costs. Would be willing to pay high prices if good quality – i.e, high price for yellow celery.
- Have aggressive positive career, vo tech, college counseling at the high school. We have a global economy and kids need to have the big picture. Parents are having to dig up the info on their own when it should be available at the school.
- Assisted living preserved, improved, expanded
- Ensure that the things going on now are continuing
- Skateboard park – and a recreational center
- Ditto
- More businesses and families here
- Have a plan for paving streets and maintaining city needs

- See a nice clean good looking town
- Use the Middle School for a technical college
- The school, community and parents are all working together
- No more empty buildings on Main Street or Front Street - no weeds growing in the gutters
- At least one more ball park and one more gym – then more tournaments could be brought in.
- Another gym could serve as teen or recreation center as well.
- Expand pool into recreation center area.
- Plan activities for youth and senior citizens to get to know each other.
- We become a community that thinks out of the box – do things differently.
- Use commissary and ball field there for the community – it is not just for the retired community.
- Use the funds drawing interest from the special projects fund to get projects done.

PROJECTS

RETIREMENT COMMUNITY

- Have a group to help beat-up homes get spruced up – assist with work and funding
- Advertise the river camp sites
- Advertise Forsyth
- Clothing store is needed here
- Use reserve funds to finance improvement districts – do a block at the time to repair sidewalks and streets. Let an individual borrow the money and pay it back like taxes.
- Need to double the Retirement Villa
- Put up signage and markings for the Custer Trail
- Take more advantage of the river –
- Draw people better into town
- Need signage out of town so people know the river parks and the museum are here – courthouse too
- Assisted living and subsidized living – both for younger and older residents
- Acquire another dentist
- More industries in town – small – to get more jobs for our young people

PROJECTS – MISC. HANDWRITTEN NOTES

- City have a long range plan for fixing streets and doing other major projects
- City owns all the equipment to do the streets themselves so they don't have to contract everything out
- It appears they have trouble keeping people in the water plant – maybe all the city employees should be under one supervisor so everyone can run the water plant and dig a ditch then when one department is short of people you wouldn't be able to see such a difference.

- Middle School needs to be utilized for something – teen center, activity center, where a person could lift weights, play basketball, etc., like Colstrip’s CPRD.
- Hire someone to manage Riverview Villa and make the profit for the City – not letting another firm make the profit and pay the city only \$17,5000 twice per year.
- Help get a skate park going for the kids and make them responsible for helping with the upkeep.
- Safer playground equipment at some of the parks
- More community functions going on
- More activities for younger generations
- City beautification to attract people
- Renovation in order to modernize our old-fashioned look and/or technologies
- More projects for younger people – whether that be a place for children to pursue their interests or a positive place for adults to interact. As it stands, the main activities are hanging out on Main Street for the kids or adults meeting in the bars.
- Focus on economic development, establishing a financially sound community and making that community a positive place to live for the entire family.